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HANDBOOK

TO

JOSHUA

[*With Slight Omissions*]

FOR THE USE OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

BY THE

REV. G. H. S. WALPOLE, D.D.

PRINCIPAL OF BEDE COLLEGE, DURHAM

RIVINGTONS

34 *KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN*

LONDON

1900

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PREFACE

THE general title to the series, of which this book is one, explains the purpose. It is 'a Handbook designed to help Teachers, especially those engaged in primary schools, in their own study for examination, and in their teaching, especially in the latter.' Those who are acquainted with the number of lessons teachers have to prepare for their daily work, and the consequent difficulty they find in making any adequate preparation for the religious instruction they must give, will be surprised that the lessons given are, on the whole, so good. The facts are usually well taught; it is their bearing which, from want of time for thought, is so frequently missed. A chapter, or part of one, is explained in detail, and the children are left with a scattered number of facts having but little relation to one another. If the blackboard is used, it is generally in explanation of words or names that the children did not know how to explain or spell. No complaint can reasonably be made, because the teachers have not the time at their disposal which is necessary for arranging and drawing out their Bible lessons. This Handbook has been arranged with the view of helping them. In the first place, the book has been divided into such sections as teach a complete lesson without any regard to the

division of chapters. It is true that one or two of these would be too long for reading round in class; but it is doubtful whether reading round does not stifle the curiosity so essential for good teaching, and tend to produce the scrappy information so much to be deplored.

Secondly, the notes and references are purposely curtailed with a view to the small amount of time that can be given to the preparation of the subject. It is hoped that all real difficulties have been noted, and that if the notes seem brief, the text may stand out the more prominently as being of first importance.

Thirdly, in selecting the subjects for the Lessons, the author has been guided entirely by the general trend of the section to be studied: for example, the Chapter on the destruction of Jericho offers many tempting lessons more striking and easier than that selected, 'National Faith'; but as this seemed to sum up the teaching of the whole section, it was chosen.

Fourthly, the arrangement of the Lessons under Matter and Method has been adopted as being most familiar. It is true, as Mr. Barnett, H.M.I., points out in *Common Sense in Education*, 'that this division is generally unsatisfactory, because the two things are hardly separable, and what appears as method in most notes of lessons is usually not method, but procedure'; yet no substitute for it has as yet appeared, and it seemed better to work with an order well known than to invent a new one.

Lastly, the summary for the blackboard has been added in order that the teacher may see at a glance what has been aimed at. It is not intended that the summary or

the arrangement should be slavishly followed. Any such imitation must inevitably rob the lesson of that freshness which ought to be its chief charm. What is hoped is that the outlines may suggest the lines on which the lesson could best be taught.

In conclusion, he trusts that those teachers for whom he has written may share with him the enjoyment and help which the study of the book has brought, and realise in their teaching that they have not only brought refreshment to their scholars, but that 'through contact with it, as with a new world, they have studied, enlightened, and developed themselves.'

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The extracts from the Revised Version contained in this volume are printed by permission of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

INTRODUCTION

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

1. Its Contents. Briefly, the work rather than the life of Joshua. Very little is told about Joshua's life; it is not a biography, the Bible never gives biographies, but a history like that of one of our own kings, which tells us of the king so far as his country was affected. So we read in this Book of Joshua so far as Israel is concerned, but all private details are omitted; we read nothing of his appearance, or his manners, and rightly, for his life was buried in his work. This work was to carry on that which Moses had already accomplished. The people, whose fathers had been slaves in Egypt, were now sufficiently trained by the discipline in which they had been nurtured to order and obedience, that they could be relied upon when called to execute a difficult mission. Their mission was a very difficult one. They were to advance into Palestine, inhabited by seven warlike nations, dispossess them, and occupy it in their place. They had to cross the deep gorge of the Jordan, rendered still more difficult by the swift torrent that ran in its bed, in the face of fierce enemies, to break down walled cities without any engineering apparatus, and to meet in the open field men accustomed to war from their youth, either hardy mountaineers who knew every pass in the hills, or lowlanders who had the advantage of chariots and horses. Without divine help and guidance this would have been impossible. The first half of the book shows how this was accomplished; the second how the no less difficult question of the division of the country amongst the tribes was decided. The story lays stress on the fact that God worked with, and through, man. The supernatural guidance and help does not save Joshua from carefully thinking what is best to be done, from using those gifts God had given

him. The people must lay hold on God's help by faith, and co-operate with energy.

Its Purpose. What is the purpose of such a book? Why should we be interested in reading the story of what might be described as 'the invasion of a little district about as large as three average English counties by a tribe of nomads from the Arabian deserts'?

In the first place, this tribe of nomads, ~~if we may allow the expression,~~ has a great—the greatest conceivable — destiny before it. They have been separated from all the peoples of the earth for the purpose of keeping a great secret which God has given them, and preparing for the time when it is to be unfolded. From these rude, half-civilised peoples, and out of this little country not bigger than Wales, is to be born the Eternal Son of God. Their history, then, is unspeakably important, because it is like the education and bringing up of one who is to be the mother of a Divine Sovereign. If they had played false with their trust, God would have been, as it were, obliged to unfold some other plan. When we read of the care that had to be exercised to prevent them losing their faith in the One God, and their hope in the coming Messiah, of the cruel extermination of all those who would be likely to seduce them, we see the reason. On that faith and hope depended the salvation of the world. 'The Israelites' sword,' writes Dr. Arnold, 'in its bloodiest executions wrought a work of mercy for all the countries of the earth to the very end of the world. They fought not for themselves, but for us. It might follow that they should thus be accounted the enemies of all mankind; it might be that they were tempted by their very distinctness to despise other nations. Still, they did God's work; still, they preserved unhurt the seed of eternal life, and were the ministers of blessing to all other nations, even though they themselves failed to enjoy it. This, then, is the reason why the book was written, and why we read it. Without it we should fail to understand one very important epoch in the training of that

chosen race from whom came 'the Christ Who is God over all, blessed for ever.'

Another reason is that in their training we may discover some of the principles God adopts in training all nations. Every nation has a destiny, and its history is both interesting and important, because it shows us something of the unseen powers that are developing it. But only something. Contrast the book of the conquest of Palestine with any record of the Norman Conquest. In the one we only see secondary causes at work, and obtain some hints of the ultimate causes; but in the other we are face to face with the ultimate causes all the time. Why did William I. win the battle of Hastings? Why did he achieve such a measure of success in settling the country? We guess at the reasons, we speak of his strength of will, his courage, his energy; but these are only secondary causes, it is conceivable that some one with all these gifts might have failed. Now what the human record cannot disclose, the divine record does. It is God Who dries up the Jordan, causes the walls of Jericho to fall down, wins the battles of Ai, Beth-horon, and Merom. The human means employed are only of secondary importance. And it is this wonderful interweaving of the divine and human in this sacred history that leads us to feel that it is what we call inspired. It would have been easy for the miraculous interpositions to have been so exaggerated that the story would have been only a Wonder Book—a Fairy Tale. But throughout this strange history we never feel that we are in the land of Romance or Imagination, but always of sober, stern reality. We say then that the men who wrote the parts of which this book is a compilation, as well as the compiler, were inspired men. In themselves they were probably what *we* should call rude and unlettered, knowing the bare rudiments of reading and writing —much what our own Cædmon was—with but few of those rare gifts which characterise our Christian authors. How was it, then, that they wrote in such a way that their words may be read not only without apology, but with the certainty of an attentive hearing, to the most cultured audiences in Christen-

dom? A little exaggeration on the one side would have led to a sense of unreality, on the other to that of weakness. There is neither, but just that balance of the divine and human which brings conviction to men who know they need grace, and yet have freewill. So we say with reason, they 'spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost' (2 S. Peter i. 21). Convinced of their inspiration, we feel that this book will unfold to us not only the means by which Israel was trained, but the principles which are guiding the destiny of England as well as that of every other nation. We may then call this religious history, and that of our own country secular history, only if we understand by that the record, not its subject. Our own history is in the main secular, because our authors have not been so directly inspired as to be able to say with certainty God helped here, but hindered there. 'Joshua' is inspired history, because the interpositions and directions of God are clearly and definitely marked out.

Authorship and Date. Of this nothing is certainly known. Some think that Joshua himself wrote it. We are told that he did write (see xxiv. 26); but the actual words in which this is stated, 'Joshua wrote *these* words in the law of God,' seem to refer simply to the transactions connected with the solemn renewal of the covenant. In any case, he did not write the whole book, as it gives an account of his own death; of that of Eleazar, who probably died about the same time; and of other events, such as the attack upon Jerusalem (cp. Joshua xv. 63, and Judg. i. 8), which happened after he went to his rest. It is therefore likely that the more recent view, that the book is a compilation of inspired records, is correct. We know that we have a quotation from the Book of Jasher, and it may well be that there are others. This view does not in the least militate against the view of inspiration to which we are led by our own judgment, as well as by that of the whole Church of God, Jewish as well as Christian. Much may have been written of the events of that most eventful period, but

only those that had the mark of the Spirit of God remained. If this view be correct, we should say that the compiler was as much inspired as the writers of any of those whose records he puts together, for on the whole the unity of the book is most marked. It is true that we have repetitions now and again, as in the descriptions of the crossing of the Jordan; but these, like those of the Resurrection, do not disturb the progress of the compiler's main idea, but only emphasise and bring out into fuller meaning the purpose of God in that great interposition. Of course, opinions will differ as to the number of inspired records which go to make up the book, but it should be borne in mind that all such must necessarily be uncertain guesses. Nothing can well be more precarious than the judgment of a Western mind of the nineteenth century on the contents of an Eastern book, written some three thousand years ago. The attentive reader will notice the general progress of the narrative, 'the graphic and yet spontaneous rendering of details which it everywhere presents,' and the striking accuracy, so far as it has been tested, of the numerous geographical and topographical notes. That there should be difficulties here and there as to boundaries, defective lists of places, *e.g.* in chapters xvi. and xvii., no lists of towns belonging to Manasseh and Ephraim, would seem to be only an evidence of the very early date of the book. Any one writing up these things in the time of the monarchy would have left a clearer impression of what he understood to be the details of the great survey made before the final distribution of the land. It is impossible then to fix the date when the documents were put together in one book. All we can say is that it bears the marks of great antiquity, and gives so faithful a picture of the events it portrays, that it is difficult to see how it could have been compiled in an age far remote from that in which they took place.

Person and Character of Joshua. The first thing that we are struck with on reading the book is the living personality of the man whose work it describes. Though, as we have said before,

but little is told about the details of his life, yet we feel we know him better than we do some of our own great kings, such as William the Conqueror or Edward I. At one time we see him on his face before the Mysterious Angel receiving with lowly reverence directions as to how Jericho is to be taken, at another standing on the battlefield and giving the signal to the liers in ambush. Again, we see him full length on the earth before the Ark of God, ashamed and confounded at the defeat his troops have sustained, and at another leading them in the irresistible charge at Merom; again we see him at one moment dealing with a sinner, whose sin had cost Israel many valuable lives, with all the tenderness of a mother; at the next, passing judgment on it with all the severity and sternness of a judge. The picture is truly human, and gives life to the narrative. His character may be said to possess both the virtues and defects of his profession, which was that of a soldier. As Dean Stanley rightly notes: 'He was not a teacher, not a prophet. . . . He was a simple, straightforward, undaunted soldier. His first appearance is in battle. "Choose out men, go out, fight with Amalek." He is always known by his spear or javelin, slung between his shoulders or stretched out in his hand. The one quality which is required of him, and described in him, is that he was "very courageous." He was strong and of a "good courage." "He was not afraid nor discouraged." He turned neither to the right hand nor to the left; but at the head of the hosts of Israel he went right forward from Jordan to Jericho, from Jericho to Ai, from Ai to Gibeon, to Beth-horon, to Merom. He wavered not for a moment; he was here, he was there, he was everywhere, as the emergency called for him. He had no words of wisdom, except those which shrewd common-sense and public spirit dictated.' The same character is borne out by the quickness of his movements, his sudden dash, his untiring pursuit, his eye for opportunities. He saw at once that in the conquest of Palestine he must divide the North from the South, and that the fall of Jericho gave him the occasion. So by the battles of Ai and Beth-horon he drove a wedge into the very centre of the country, preventing any serious

concentration of Northern and Southern forces. Again, he has a soldier's sternness. The slaughter of the Canaanites, the contempt for the five cowardly kings, the judgment on Achan, his wife and children, the houghing of the horses after the battle of Merom, show us a man who could be very severe. In all these he believed that he was the instrument of God's will, and allowed no feeling of sympathy to interfere with duty. He has too a soldier's sense of honour. He gave particular directions to the spies to see to Rahab's safety, and never thought of going back upon the word he had given to the Gibeonites. Such a character being human has, of course, its limitations. He was probably lacking in that fulness of sympathy which his great master Moses possessed. It is worthy of note that he left no successor. He probably had no close friend. His life was lived apart from the men he served so faithfully. He understood his own work, which demanded instant obedience, but like others who have been raised up to do a great and necessarily stern work, he lived much alone, and consequently found it difficult to enter into the thoughts of others. We take his attitude towards Eldad and Medad as an example (Num. xi. 28). In his own sphere obedience was a duty with no exception, Joshua therefore could not understand why his master Moses should allow any who appeared to be guilty of insubordination to exercise the divine gift which had been given to them. It may be that this spiritual narrowness has led to the strange omission of his name from the heroes of faith in Hebrews xi. With this natural limitation which only makes his character the more human, Joshua stands out amongst the soldiers of the Bible, many of whom have high testimony borne to them, as pre-eminent not only in those high qualities that are essential to leadership, but in the still higher gifts of devotion and faith. He was the first to bear the greatest of all names, and it is not going too far to say that so far as the Bible record tells us he bore it without a stain.

Section of Country shewing relative heights of several places mentioned in Joshua.
Jebus-Hebron-Hazor
Ai-Shiloh-Upr.Beth horon
Shechem-Lr.Beth horon
Makhedah
Dor
Mts: of Moab
Jericho
Gilgal
Bottom of Dead Sea
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
Sea Level
1000
2000
3000
Sketch Map of PALESTINE to illustrate the Book of Joshua.
Zidon
Canaanites
Hivites
Mt Hermon
Kedesh
WATERS OF MEROM
Hazor
Achsaph
BASHAN
SEA OF CHINNERETH
Golan
Girgashites
Canaanites
Shimron
Dor
Canaanites
Mt. Ebal
Shechem
Mt. Gerizim
Adam
R. Jabbok
Zarethan
GILEAD
Shiloh
Ramoth Gilead
Canaanites
Hivites
Beth horon
Bethel
Ai
Jericho
Makhedah
Ajalon
Gibeon
Gilgal
AMMON
Jebusites
Jebus
Heshbon
Libnah
Canaanites
Eglon
Anakim
Lachish
Hebron
DEAD SEA
Bezer
Debir
Gaza
Hittites
R. Arnon
Amorites
MOAB

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

CHAPTER I

NOW after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto
a Deut. i. 38. Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' [a]minister, saying,
2. Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, *even* to the children of Israel. 3.
b ch. xiv. 9. [b]Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. 4. From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea *toward* the going down of the sun, shall
1 border. be your coast.[1] 5. There shall not any man *be able to* stand

NOTE.—Marginal readings *not in italics* are from the Revised Version.

1. **Now after the death of Moses.** Moses had died in the land of Moab (Deut. xxxiv. 6) at the great age of 120 years. Before dying he had 'laid his hands' upon Joshua, virtually appointing him his successor, and in consequence of this ordination Joshua was 'full of the spirit of wisdom.'

Joshua the son of Nun—of the powerful tribe of Ephraim. 1 Chron. vii. 20-27.

Note the following particulars of his life—(*a*) His boyhood and early manhood passed in slavery and amidst an idolatrous people in Egypt. (*b*) The ripe years of his manhood from forty to eighty years of age were spent in Sinai under the stern discipline of war, privation, and hardship. It was during this time that he acted as Moses' 'minister,' and as such was chosen to be one of the spies, and so became acquainted with the land which he was now about to conquer. So he was trained by experience of life for the work which now lay before him.

The Lord spake. Whether through the High Priest (Num. xxvii. 21), or in a dream (Num. xii. 6), or in a trance (Num. xxiv. 3-4), we do not know—probably immediately—and in such a manner that Joshua had no doubt that God was giving him a command.

4. **From the Wilderness**—*i.e.* from the Desert of Arabia in the South to Mount Lebanon in the North, which could be seen from Joshua's camp.

5. **As I was with Moses.** Joshua had very clear knowledge of what this meant. Again and again he had seen his master in peril, and when

before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with thee: [c]I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. 6. [d]Be strong and of a good courage: for [2]unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them. 7. Only be thou strong and very courageous, that *thou* mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: [e]turn not from it *to* the right hand or *to* the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. 8. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt [3]have good success. 9. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee whithersoever thou goest.

c Heb. xiii. 5.

d Deut. xxxi. 23

2 Thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land.

e Deut. v. 32.

3 deal wisely. (R. V. margin.)

the danger was most imminent then the divine protection had been most striking.

6. **Be strong and of a good courage.** This is repeated three times. Moral strength to follow God's will in spite of the voice of the people, and courage to face great difficulties with calmness, are the two essentials for every great leader.

7. **Prosper.** The R. V. (margin) gives the better translation 'deal wisely,' and this too is the better sense. God does not promise success to those who keep the path of His commandments, but He does guarantee that they shall be guided to take the best possible course under the circumstances, and this, the ability to act wisely, is the highest reward.

8. **This book of the law.** It is not clear as to what this roll or book really contained, but we know from Deut. xxxi. 9 that Moses wrote a book of instruction before he died, and that he delivered it to the Levites for safe keeping. We have it in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, with such additions as were made to it in after years. Joshua's deep reverence for God and his affection for his master would lead him to make it the paramount guide of his life, against which there could be no appeal.

Thou shalt meditate therein day and night. This direction might seem impossible for a busy soldier responsible for the welfare of thousands of others, were it not that General Gordon and others have shown us that it is the main secret of influence in a crowded life.

10. Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people,
4 midst of the camp. saying, 11. Pass through the [4] host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it.
12. And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half
f Num. xxxii. 20. the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying, 13. [f] Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and
5 will give you. [5] hath given you this land. 14. Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses
6 over before. gave you on *this* side Jordan; but ye shall pass [6] before your brethren armed, all the mighty *men* of valour, and help them; 15. until the LORD have given your brethren rest, as *he hath given* you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them: then ye shall

10. **Then Joshua commanded.** No hesitation or questioning, the command is at once obeyed.

The Officers. It is estimated that the camp contained at least two millions of people. The fighting men alone amounted to 600,000 men. This great host was divided into tribes ranged under great chiefs, and contained a large number of civil and military officers. Allusions are made to them from time to time. See Num. xi. 16; xxxi. 14, 48; Deut. i. 15.

11. **Prepare you victuals.** This seems to be an indication that the miraculous sustenance of the manna is about to cease. Yet we know from v. 12 that it did not cease 'till the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land,' *i.e.* some six days afterwards. It is not necessary, however, to suppose that there is any reference to the manna, but only to the other food which they were accustomed to eat with it.

Within three days. This address was not given *before* but *after* the spies were despatched, for eight days intervened between the sending of the spies (ii. 1), and the actual passage of the river (iii. 2 *sqq.*). These 'three days' are identical with those mentioned in iii. 2. The chapters in the Bible do not always follow chronological order, the authors of the books have their minds fixed on moral rather than temporal sequence unless they state the opposite. Bishop Wordsworth is doubtless right in saying that it is not likely that after Joshua has been commanded to do a thing he would send spies to see whether it was wise for him to attempt it.

12. **And to the Reubenites and to the Gadites.** See Deut. iii. 18-20, from which we learn that one of the conditions on which the land was given was, that they should help Israel to get possession of West Palestine as Israel had helped them to obtain East Palestine.

return unto the land of your possession, and [7] enjoy it, which Moses the LORD's servant gave you [8] on *this* side Jordan *toward* the sunrising. 16. And they answered Joshua, saying, All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us, we will go. 17. According as we hearkened unto Moses in all *things*, so will we hearken unto thee: only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses. 18. Whosoever *he be* that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: only be strong and of a good courage.

[7] possess.
[8] beyond.

16. **All that thou commandest us.** Their reply was in every way satisfactory. They would not only do what they promised Moses, but take their orders from Joshua with the same readiness and confidence that they had taken those of his great predecessor. Note that the exhortation of God to Joshua finds an echo in their reply. They too wish that their leader may be strong and full of courage.

LESSON I

A Great Commission

INTRODUCTION. — Explain the word Commission, *e.g.* the Queen's Commission—to-day we speak of the Commission of the King of Kings. Show that this is given to every one, to serve God in labour, trade, business, teaching. This commission solemnly conferred at Confirmation. By what sign? When was Joshua's conferred? See Deut. xxxiv. 9. When explained? Read Josh. i. 2-5.

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. Joshua's Commission explained. Not merely to succeed Moses and rule this great host of two millions of people, but to carry them into a strange country unknown to all except Joshua and Caleb, to conquer fierce and savage nations, some noted for their size, others for their iron chariots, others for their walled cities, and then to divide this land amongst his countrymen, who were still fickle, jealous, and quarrelsome. Note further that his own people were not a disciplined army, but a host of men, women, and children just out of slavery.	1. Describe the country to be conquered. Name the seven nations and their characteristics. Show that a boy's profession often takes him to a strange place, to new faces, but there he will find a kingdom to be won for God.

LESSON I—*continued.* A GREAT COMMISSION

MATTER.

2. His Preparation.

Joshua had been well trained as a soldier at Rephidim (Ex. xvii. 9) as Moses' private confidential servant at Sinai (Exod. xxxii. 17), as the accredited representative of the nation in Palestine (Num. xiii. 17), and in these and many other trying positions he had fulfilled his trust well. And because he had been faithful in a little, God will now commit to him a great position. He had already done his best in despatching the spies, and so had made himself ready for the command.

3. The helps by which it is to be carried out.

Though Joshua had had a wide experience of life and must have recognised that he had many valuable gifts, he is not told to rely on these for his success. His great temptations would be weakness and cowardice, kindness leading him to the one and tremendous dangers to the other. He is taught to avoid them by perpetual meditation in God's law. God's word is to be his main help. Besides this he is promised the presence of God, 'I will be with thee.'

4. The spirit in which he received it.

Trained as a soldier to obey instantly he does so here. He asks no questions, suggests no difficulties, but at once issues orders to the

METHOD.

2. Now speak of the necessity of preparation for divine commissions. Even the Son of God, Jesus Christ, did not begin His work till He had waited thirty years in Nazareth—so S. Paul—so Joshua. God does not give His work to raw recruits.

Here point out the importance of school life, of the time spent as an apprentice, on our use of this the future depends. 'To him that *hath* shall be given.'

3. Show that whilst preparation is very useful and necessary, it largely fails unless it has taught a boy to rely chiefly on God. What is the great stimulus to faith? The Bible. Now read i. 5-8. What does God teach Joshua to rely on?

The law so important to Joshua, what must the Bible be to us?

Show here how small Joshua's Bible was compared to ours, how poor when compared with the wealth of teaching given us in the New Testament.

Speak of Gordon's Bible, black with underlinings, now amongst the treasures of Windsor Castle. It was his guide and comfort all through his life.

Show also that the Presence of God promised to Joshua is given to us in the gift of the Holy Ghost at Confirmation. Show from the New Testament how He was the great Strength, the Comforter to all the Christians.

4. We have seen what a very difficult piece of work was given Joshua, we now note how he received it. Read verse 10. Contrast his calm faith with the hesitation of Gideon (Judg. vi. 36-40).

LESSON I—*continued.* A GREAT COMMISSION

MATTER.

host to break up camp and advance to the river—the river now in flood, now impossible to cross. God will make that and other things clear at the right time. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' Note also how Joshua's faith stimulates the faith of the host.

METHOD.

Note faith is obedience without asking questions.

When we are sure of God's Will, only one thing remains, to do it.

'Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.'

Nothing so catching as faith. The faith of one boy may excite the faith of a whole school.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

A Great Commission.

He gave them ten pounds, and said unto them, Trade ye herewith till I come—S. Luke xix. 13.

1. *The Object.* To work for God.
   Difficulties—strange country—seven powerful nations—poor war material—undisciplined army.
   'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.'
2. *The Officer.* Eighty years old—tried in courage (Amalekites)—devotion (Sinai)—loyalty (Kadesh)—not found wanting.
   'To him that hath shall be given.'
3. *The Helps.* God's Law—day and night.
   'Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet.'
   The Holy Spirit—'I will be with thee.'
4. *The Obedience.* Soldiers ask no questions, but do what they are told.
   Command issued in the face of difficulties.
   When we know God's will, the next thing is to do it.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO LESSON I

2. *Jordan* (1) Name. It means the 'descender,' so called because of its very rapid fall. It descends 1500 feet in 200 miles, and in one place 610 feet in 60 miles.

(2) Source. It rises in the fork of the two ranges of Anti-Libanus.

(3) Course. First falls as a stream into the mountain tarn of Merom, then as a rapid river into the Lake of Gennesareth, and then as a torrent, plunging through twenty-seven rapids with a fall of 1000 feet into the Dead Sea.

(4) Windings. If it took a straight course the distance would not be much above 150 miles, but its course is so crooked that it traverses a distance of 200 miles before it reaches the Dead Sea.

(5) Banks. It has three banks. One, the bed of the stream when it is low ; the second an extent of soft banks of sloping sedimentary deposit. The third, a dense thicket of jungle, tree, bush, and rush—the haunt of wild boar, wolves, and other animals.

Lebanon. A mountain range in the north of Palestine, called Lebanon or White, either because so often covered with snow, as Mont *Blanc*, or because of the white colours of its limestone peaks. There are two distinct ranges, the western being called Lebanus or Lebanon, the eastern Anti-Libanus. The average elevation of the peaks of Lebanon is from 6000 to 8000 feet, but the mountain is cultivated up to 6000 feet. The vine, olives, figs, mulberries still flourish on the mountain side, and there are also remnants of pine, oak, and cedar. High up at a level of over 6000 feet lies the last grove of cedars, once the glory of Lebanon.

Euphrates. 'The good and abounding river,' so called because it is the largest, longest, and most important river of West Asia. It rises in the Armenian Mountains, flows first west and then south-east, and after a course of 1780 miles empties itself into the Persian Gulf. Quite early in Jewish history, *i.e.* as early as the time of Abraham, it was chosen as the eastern limit to the promised possessions of Israel (Gen. xv. 18).

Hittites. Chethites or Hethites descended from *Heth*, the second son of Canaan.

It was from them that Abraham bought the field and cave of Machpelah. Their land therefore at that time lay in the south, but afterwards, perhaps owing to the pressure of the Amalekites, they went north to the mountainous country in the centre of the land. They are best known to us through David's faithful officer Uriah the Hittite, but to Joshua as the enemies of the Lord. In this chapter they are put for the inhabitants of the land generally.

CHAPTER II

AND Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and [a] came *into* an harlot's house, [b] named Rahab, and lodged there. 2. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to-night of the children of Israel to search out the country. 3. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country. 4. And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, [1] There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they *were*: 5. and it came to pass *about the time* of shutting of the gate, when it was

[a] Heb. xi. 31; Jam. ii. 25.
[b] Matt. i. 5; Ruth iv. 20, 21.

[1] Yea, the men came.

1. **Shittim**—acacia trees—the place of the encampment being so called from the number of acacias growing there. See Num. xxv. 1, and xxxiii. 49.

Jericho. Naturally the first point of attack, as commanding the main passes which lead into Palestine—a very strong place, surrounded by high walls, and yet able to stand a long siege, as possessing abundance of water. 'By crossing Jordan, destroying Jericho, occupying the heights by a night march, and delivering the crushing blow of the battle of Bethhoron, Joshua executed the favourite manœuvre of the greatest captain by sea or land since the days of Nelson and Napoleon—he broke through and defeated the centre of the enemy's line, and then stood in a position to strike with his whole force successively right and left' (Note to Lenormant's *Manual of Oriental History*, i. p. 111, quoted in Cambridge Bible for Schools).

Rahab afterwards married a Jew, and became the mother of Boaz, grandfather of Jesse, but earned a greater title to fame by the inclusion of her name in the genealogy of our Lord (S. Matt. i. 5). Both the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 31) and S. James (ii. 25) glorify her faith.

4-5. **I wist not, etc.**—It is never right to deceive with a view of saving one's own life, but it is a question not easily settled whether, in time of war, it is not right to deceive an enemy in order to save the lives of others. Scripture does not approve Rahab's answer, though it approves the faith which led her to risk her own life in order that God's cause might conquer. We cannot determine the question one way or the other from the Bible—it must be decided on its own merits.

Shutting of the gate. 'A necessary precaution, owing to the absence of all artificial light from the streets of Oriental cities' (Maclear).

dark, that the men [2] went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them. 6. But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. 7. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.

8. And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; 9. and she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land [3] faint because of you. 10. For we have heard how the LORD [c] dried up the water of the Red sea [4] for you, when you came out of Egypt; and what you did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that [5] *were* on the *other* side Jordan, [d] Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. 11. And as soon as we had heard *these things*, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he *is* God in heaven above, and in earth beneath. 12. Now therefore,

[2] came.

[3] melt away.

[c] Ex. xiv. 21; ch. iv. 23.

[4] before.

[5] beyond.

[d] Num. xxi. 24.

6. **Roof of the house.** Roofs of Eastern houses were, and still are, for the most part flat (S. Mark ii. 4). There, on the hot summer days, people sit and take the air, and also transact business. It would be a natural place for drying the damp moist stalks of flax. For various uses of roofs in the East, see 1 Sam. ix. 25, 26; 2 Sam. xi. 2; Dan. iv. 29 (marg.).

9. **Your terror.** Forty years before, Moses had prophesied that the destruction of the host of Pharaoh in the Red Sea would cause amazement to the Dukes of Edom, trembling to the mighty men of Moab, and such fear to the Canaanites that they would melt away, and now all was fulfilled. See how the uninterrupted success of the Israelites increased the fear excited by the story of these supernatural wonders.

11. **The Lord your God—He is God.** This remarkable confession is like that of the Centurion of the New Testament. Moses had endeavoured to bring home the truth it contained to his own people (Deut. iv. 39), and had he heard it from the lips of this heathen, might have exclaimed, 'Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.' It practically acknowledged the God of Israel as the Ruler of the Universe.

12. **A true token.** *i.e.* Some proof of your truth. This was given in the oath of fidelity the spies made, in the words 'Our life for yours,' *i.e.* may God take our lives instead of yours if we fail to keep our word.

I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token: 13. and *that* ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death. 14. And the men answered her, Our life for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD [6] hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee. 15. Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house *was* upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. 16. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers [7] meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way. 17. And the men said unto her, We *will be* blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear. 18. Behold, *when* we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt [8] bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. 19. And it shall be, *that* whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood *shall be* upon his head, and we *will be* guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head, if *any* hand be upon him. 20. And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear. 21. And she said, According unto your words, so *be* it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and

[6] giveth.

[7] light upon.

[8] gather unto thee into the house.

16. **To the mountain.** The mountains behind Jericho where the spies went are full of natural caves, which would make good hiding-places.

18. **This line of scarlet thread.** The spies evidently point out the sign they desire to be used. They choose a red cord because red was the symbol of their own redemption. They remembered a time when, amidst a general destruction, only those houses marked with red were spared. In the destruction that was about to overtake Jericho it was suitable that the same symbol of salvation should be used.

she bound the scarlet line in the window. 22. And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought *them* throughout all the way, but found *them* not.

9 Then. 23. [9] So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all *things* that befell them: 24. And they said unto Joshua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into

10 and moreover . . . before us. our hands all the land; [10] for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.

24. **All the inhabitants.** Contrast the confident tone of this message with that of the spies sent out by Moses. Cp. Num. xiii. 26. Joshua and the host must have been greatly cheered by the news, as Gideon was with the recital of the dream that he heard in the Midianitish camp. Cp. Judges vii. 13.

LESSON II

Rahab's Faith.

INTRODUCTION.—Last week a lesson on the Commission God gives us, this week on the spirit which enables us to carry it out. What is that? How maintained? But if no Bible or law of God? Then conscience. To-day we look at the spirit of faith manifested in a heathen.

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. Its Birth. Rahab, a heathen—bad like her fellow-citizens—but listens to her conscience, which tells her judgment will follow sin (Rom. ii. 15, 16). Rumour tells her this judgment is at hand; Egypt has been judged, so too the Amorites (quote iv. 9-11), and now Jericho will be judged. Every one in Jericho very much afraid (verse 11), but no one turns to the God of Israel except Rahab. She believes He is a God of mercy as well as of judgment, and so to her house he sends salvation.	1. Show that fear often precedes belief—fear of death leads us to turn to the doctor, fear of punishment to some friend—a dread of God's judgments very wholesome. So in the Litany we ask for 'a heart to dread' as well as 'love' God. So the crucified malefactor led to faith through fear (S. Luke xxiii. 40).
2. Its Character. Rahab's faith is now tested. Two men come to her house. She finds out they are from the camp of Israel. Ought she not to give them up, for they are spies? No! because they are the servants of the God in whom she is now beginning to believe.	2. Show clearly the kind of faith Rahab had. Take a picture showing the kindness of Christians in India to the plague or famine-stricken natives, and quote S. James ii. 14-17. Good deeds are to faith what breath is to the body—(contrast a dead and a living body)—

LESSON II—*continued.* RAHAB'S FAITH

MATTER.	METHOD.
She allows them to stay there. Next morning her faith again tested. Messengers from the king arrive demanding the spies. She now risks her life for her faith. But why not leave Jericho and betake herself to the people in whose God she now believes? She has a father, mother, brothers, sisters, these she must save. God was pleased with Rahab's faith. She was justified—*i.e.* became God's friend by it.	and faith has no colour or life without them (James ii. 25-27). Then go on to show what life Rahab's faith had.
3. **Its Results.** Faith is always linked with Divine Power, so faith always saves. (1) Rahab's faith saved her parents and near relatives. (2) Her faith saved her own name from its bad reputation, so that it became one of the most illustrious (S. Matt. i. 5). (3) Her faith gave great encouragement to Joshua and his host, who learned through the spies that Jericho was in great fear.	3. Draw a picture on the blackboard of two houses in a storm—the one stands firm and steady, for it is founded on a rock, the other is in pieces, for it was built on the sand, and show that the rock is an active faith like Rahab's, which gives stability to life when it is tried. For genuine faith is obedience to God's will, and that leads to habit, and habit to unshaken character. Cf. S. Matt. vii. 24.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Rahab's Faith.

'Faith without works is dead' (James ii. 20).

1. *Cause.* Fear—so Penitent Thief.
   Rahab afraid because (1) news of Israel's approach; (2) Conscience—'Conscience makes cowards of us all.' 'The fear of the Lord tendeth to life' (Prov. xix. 23).
2. *Character.* A living Faith.
   Rahab risks her life—fears God more than the command of the king. Faith, not content with promises, passes into action. 'Faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself' (James ii. 17).
3. *Power.* A Saving Faith.
   Faith always saves. Rahab's faith saves (1) The spies; (2) herself; (3) her family; (4) her reputation (S. Matt. i. 5).
   'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved' (Acts xvii. 31).

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO LESSON II

Jericho, according to the opinion of some, means 'a place of fragrance,' perhaps from the balsam trees which grew in abundance there. Others say that it means the City of Palm Trees, from a vast grove of palm trees nearly three miles broad and eight miles long. Sayce, however, says that it is called after the moon-god Yâreâkh. It was in early days a fenced city with walls so thick that houses were built on them; it was also of some commercial importance, for besides sheep, oxen, and asses, we hear of vessels of brass and iron and abundance of silver and gold. 'No place in Palestine was more fertile, and it commanded the ford that led across the Jordan from the east' (Sayce's *Early History of the Hebrews*).

Note—(1) *Its fall* through the direct judgment of God, and the curse that was invoked upon it by Joshua. (2) *Its restoration*, about 500 years later, by Hiel in the time of Ahab, and the judgment on the second founder, who lost his eldest son when the foundation stone was laid, and his youngest when he 'set up the gates thereof.' (3) *Its connection with our Lord's Life*. Here the Great Descendant of Rahab restored sight to the blind (S. Matt. xx. 30), and accepted the hospitality of Zacchæus the publican.

Amorites. Of kin to the Hittites, for in Gen. x. the Amorite is given as the fourth son of Canaan. With the Hittites and Jebusites their home was in the mountains of West Palestine (Num. xiii. 29). But in still earlier times they lived on the east side of Jordan, their two chief kingdoms being those of Sihon and Og, the latter ruling in Bashan, the former more to the south. 'On the Egyptian monuments they are depicted as a tall race, with fair skins, light (also black) hair, and blue eyes. The same type is still met with in Palestine, especially in the extreme south' (Sayce).

CHAPTER III

AND Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. 2. And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through [1] the host; 3. And they commanded the people, saying, When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests the Levites bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it: 4. Yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it; that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed *this* way † heretofore. 5. And Joshua said unto the people, [a] Sanctify yourselves: for to-morrow the LORD will do wonders among you. 6. And

[1] the midst of the camp.

† *Heb.* since yesterday, and the third day.

[a] Lev. xx. 7; Num. xi. 18; ch. vii. 13; 1 Sam. xvi. 5.

1. **And Joshua rose early . . . and they removed from Shittim.** Note Joshua's decision. Having heard the story of the spies, he felt there was nothing further to wait for, and ordered an immediate advance from the encampment in 'the acacias' (Shittim) to the river bank. The order must have caused widespread surprise in the host, for the river was now in flood, and the place where it seemed that Joshua intended to cross was not fordable even at low water.

3. **The Ark of the Covenant.** For its description see Exod. xxv. 10-16. It was a wooden chest about four feet long, from two to three feet in breadth, and the same in height. Its oldest name was the Ark of Jehovah, as being the symbol of His Presence. The other names by which it was known were 'Ark of the Testimony,' 'Ark of the Covenant,' as it contained within it the 'two Tables of Testimony.'

4. **Yet there shall be a space.** The ark was to precede the host by nearly a mile, partly for the sake of reverence, partly—as the verse explains—that the host might see which way to go.

5. **Sanctify yourselves.** This implied the washing of their clothes (see Exod. xix. 10), and some measure of self-discipline, such as fasting (see Joel ii. 15, 16), and would excite in the people a sense of expectation, already aroused by Joshua's words. The word would mean 'separate yourselves from your ordinary pursuits and concentrate your minds on God.' All God's blessings are conditioned by faith, and the great miracle that was about to take place depended upon Israel being in a religious state of mind.

Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

7. And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that [b] as I was with Moses, *so* I will be with thee. 8. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, ye shall stand still in Jordan.

[b] ch. i. 5.

9. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God. 10. And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God *is* among you, and *that* he will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. 11. Behold, the ark of the covenant of the LORD of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan. 12. Now therefore take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, [2] out of every tribe a man. 13. And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord

[2] for every.

7. I will begin to magnify thee. When a man is placed by divine appointment in a position, care is taken that he shall have the confidence of the people over whom he is set to rule. So 'the Lord magnified Solomon exceedingly' (1 Chron. xxix. 25).

10. Hereby ye shall know. One purpose of the miracle was that Israel might be convinced that '*the living*' God was with them, and that therefore they must of necessity succeed in every enterprise on which he sent them.

The Canaanites. For some account of these peoples see Additional Notes, but note here that Joshua does not shut his eyes to the magnitude of the task he has undertaken. Seven great nations, accustomed to war, and armed with superior weapons, are to be driven out! And how? See next verse.

12. Take you twelve men. Their purpose is set forth in iv. 2.

13. And it shall come to pass. Note Joshua's faith. He describes this stupendous wonder, which had not yet happened, as though he were predicting some ordinary occurrence. But it is to be remembered that he was one of the very few present who had seen with his own eyes a similar miracle.

of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, *that* the waters of Jordan shall be cut off [3]*from* the waters that come down from above; and they [c]shall stand [4]upon an heap.

14. And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, [5]and the priests bearing the [d]ark of the covenant before the people; 15. And [6]as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the [7]brim of the water, (for [e]Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) 16. That the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose up [8]upon an heap very

3 even the waters.
c Ps. cxiv. 3.
4 in one heap.
5 the priests that bear the ark of the covenant being before the people.
d Acts vii. 45.
6 when.
7 brink.
e 1 Chron. xii. 15; Eccles. xxiv. 26.
8 in one heap, a great way off, at Adam, the city.

15. **Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest.** This must not be taken to mean that the surrounding country was flooded, but that the river was at flood owing to the melting of the snows of Hermon in the springtime. Harvest in Palestine takes place between Passover and Pentecost. Barley is ripe at the end of March, and barley harvest takes place in April and May; the wheat harvest is not till May and June. Now the barley was ripe just before the first Passover (Exod. ix. 31), and it is ripe just before the great passage across the Jordan. The two greatest events in the history of Israel happened at the same season of the year; in this way the faith of the people who had the Passover in mind was strengthened.

16. **The waters which came down from above stood and rose up.** The place where this happened is called Adam, near Zarethan, a town well known when the book was written. Unfortunately, we have no exact knowledge of either place. Adam has been identified with Damieh, about sixteen miles above Jericho, and Zarethan with Sartabeh, a cliff near by. If this identification is correct, it is interesting to note that at this place 'high rocks compress the Jordan valley within its narrowest limits, and seem almost to throw a barrier across it' (Maclear). It is possible that a landslip may have occurred here and dammed the passage across, as happened in 1267 (see Additional Note). That the event should take place by natural means is not contrary to the spirit of the narrative, which directs our attention to the place where the stoppage took place, and is quite in accord with God's usual ways. Every miracle we may suppose to be the result of the operation of some new force modifying or changing the working of the force we are familiar with; that God should show us what that force is does not detract from the greatness of the result. If the temporary drying up of Jordan was the result of a landslip, God's hand would be quite sufficiently marked by the fact that it took place at a certain fixed time when it was needed. Harper (*The Bible and Modern Discoveries*, p. 148) writes, 'It has been suggested that the waters of the Jordan were suddenly dammed up by a landslip or similar convulsion. The appearance of the banks and the curious bends

far from the city Adam, that *is* beside Zaretan: and those
[9] went. that [9] came down toward the sea of [10] the plain, *even* the
[10] Arabah. salt sea, [11] failed, *and* were cut off: and the people passed
[11] were wholly cut off. over right against Jericho. 17. And the priests that bare
the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry
ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed
[12] the nation. over on dry ground, until all [12] the people were passed
clean over Jordan.

of the river near this place would seem to support the idea.' That the miracle should take place where nature offered some advantages is quite in accordance with God's methods. The fact that Scripture speaks of it as happening at '*a great way off*" seems to make it clear that the host did not see the wall of water. God's great works are not done for display. Note the privacy with which our Lord worked most of His miracles, and the fact that no one saw the Resurrection.

LESSON III

Crossing of the Jordan

MAN'S NECESSITY, GOD'S OPPORTUNITY

INTRODUCTION.—Refer to last lesson—Jericho in fear? Of what? The fear now increased. Israel now marching down to the river. Still they cannot cross for the river is in flood, so man thinks, but God otherwise—'Man's necessity is God's opportunity.' This our lesson to-day.

MATTER.

1. Man's necessity.

The host of Israel on the eve of a great crisis. About to advance into an enemy's country against seven powerful nations (v. 10), confronted by a great and apparently insurmountable obstacle, the torrent of Jordan at flood tide. Impossible to cross with the river in its present condition. And even when it goes down, how can they do so without exposing themselves to destruction by the enemy? God's people often in great straits. So the whole world once, separated off from its promised home by sin resulting in death. None had been able to cross (Rom. v. 12), though many had tried.

METHOD.

1. Illustrate by contrasting with the conqueror's invasion of England—similar difficulty there, the English Channel, but show that Joshua's is greater—he has no boats and an immense host of women and children to ferry over besides his fighting men.

Show why we English people so deeply interested. This invasion typical of another invasion in which we are taking part—the invasion of the kingdom of evil.

Describe the Jordan—note the name of the place where the waters were cut off—refer to the second Adam and to the Sea of Death where all the waters till then had flowed.

LESSON III—*continued.* CROSSING OF THE JORDAN

MATTER.	METHOD.
2. God's opportunity. The host in wonderful order marches to the brink of the river—the Ark-bearers reach the swiftly flowing waters—enter them, and then suddenly stop. The water less and less, at last nothing but mud and stones. When the people who are a long way behind reach the river, they find the river bed dry. God has met man's need by stretching forth His hand to stay the waters. So too the other great need. This time God Himself comes down to lead the Host, He steps into the waters of death—'tasted death for every man' (Heb. ii. 9). All His disciples when they come to the dark river feel no fear (Ps. xxiii.), for He is standing there, and they have faith to pass boldly over.	2. Describe the procession in detail, noting how far the Ark was in front. Picture the amazement of the people as they see what has happened, and the fear of their enemies as they see that the great obstacle has been removed. Show that directly Christ tasted of death it was destroyed, for it had not power over His body, which saw no corruption (Acts ii. 31). Picture the astonishment of the Pharisees as they hear that their enemy has passed through death.
3. The connecting link. 'He could there do no mighty works' (S. Mark vi. 5). God limited by man's unbelief. If Joshua and the host had disbelieved God's word, the river would never have stayed. So too it was the faith of S. Mary and the Apostles that made our Lord's redeeming work possible. What is true of the nation and race is true also of the individual. Not sufficient to be in great need, but we must lay hold on God that the need may be supplied.	3. Picture the different needs of boys and girls, in their lessons, their struggles with sin; and show that the proverb 'God helps those who help themselves' is the same as God helps those who believe. Our struggles if based on prayer are evidences of faith.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Man's Necessity, God's Opportunity.

The help that is done upon earth He doeth it Himself.

1. *Man's Necessity.*
   Israel's need—the river—flood—all banks overflowed—no crossing possible—Man's need—sin—at its worst—none doing good, no, not one. 'Death passed unto all men, for all have sinned' (Rom. v. 12).
2. *God's Opportunity.* The Ark—waters diminishing—mud and stones appear—then dry land—people rejoicing—cross over safely.
   The Shechinah of God—at 'the fulness of times'—'tastes death'—but sees no corruption—rises again—effects of sin destroyed—the world rejoices—Easter triumph, Easter joy. Nought but sin can this destroy.
3. *The Connecting link.*—Only those with Joshua cross over.
   Only those with Jesus cross over.
   Jesus with *us* by Baptism—'made members of Christ.'
   We with Jesus by faith—renunciation and obedience.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO LESSON III

The Priests, the Levites, *i.e.* the priests who belonged to the tribe of Levi. They were separated off from the rest of Israel by their solemn consecration, their dress, their duties, and their maintenance. For their consecration see Exod. xxix. 4, and for their dress see Exod. xxviii. They were very carefully chosen, one of the marks of their selection being that they had no physical defect (Lev. xxi. 17-24), and their marriages were hedged round with special rules. Their work lay chiefly in the Tabernacle or Temple, but their first duty was to minister to the needs of the people, whether guilty, penitent, or rejoicing. They were further responsible for the education of the people (Lev. x. 11; Deut. xxxiii. 10). And so busied, it was clearly impossible to provide for their own maintenance, so they were supported by lands, tithes, etc.

Canaanites, *i.e.* the dwellers in Canaan or 'the lowlands' of Palestine. The word 'Phœnician' is the equivalent of Canaanite, and Phœnicia is the original Canaan on the sea coast. Primarily the word 'Canaan' was applied to the coast, but afterwards extended to the whole country. So too with the word *Canaanite*, which was applied to all the inhabitants of Palestine. The Canaanites proper dwelt in the lowlands, where they could drive their chariots with success (Judg. i. 9, iv. 3; Josh. xvii. 16), and near the sea, hence their mercantile pursuits, which assumed such prominence that the word Canaanite became synonymous with merchant (Isa. xxiii. 8; Ezek. xvii. 4).

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO LESSON III—*continued*

Hivites. Either 'midlanders' or 'villagers.' Apparently related to Canaan as their ancestor (Gen. x. 17). In the Book of Genesis they come before us as a peaceful and commercial people, given to trade, especially in cattle (Gen. xxxiv. 2, 10, 21). In Joshua there is the same disposition to peace, and a readiness to employ any means for obtaining it (Josh. ix. 3-27).

Perizzites. The meaning of the name is difficult to determine, but it possibly means rustics or dwellers in open, unwalled villages. Their character was probably that of peasants engaged chiefly in agriculture. Some have thought they lived in the south of Palestine, but others in the west—in the forest country of Carmel; all are agreed that, whether the aboriginal inhabitants of Palestine, they were—with the Canaanites—amongst the earliest settlers.

Girgashites. Nothing is known of this tribe beyond the name.

Jebusites. According to Gen. x., Canaan was their ancestor. They were mountaineers, a hardy and warlike people, maintaining their position even after they lost their king at Bethhoron. Jerusalem, or Jebus, as it was then known, their fortress, was in their hands till the time of David; and even then, had it not been for their boastful bravado, they might possibly have kept it. Adonizedek and Araunah, who sold the Temple site to David, were both Jebusite kings, and it is possible that Melchizedek was also king in the same tribe.

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO CHAPTER III

Sayce (*The Early History of the Hebrews*, p. 249) gives the following interesting illustration of the crossing of the Jordan:—'M. Clermont-Ganneau has pointed out a passage in the Arabic historian Nowairi, in which an account is given of the construction in A.D. 1266 of a bridge across the Jordan by the Sultan Beybars I. of Egypt, when, in consequence of a landslip, the bed of the river was for a time left dry. The bridge was built on five arches between the stream of the Qurawa and Tel Damieh, perhaps the Adam of the Old Testament. But no sooner was it completed than part of the piers gave way. The Sultan was greatly vexed, and blamed the builders, and sent them back to repair the damage. They found the task very difficult owing to the rise of the waters and the strength of the current. But in the night preceding the dawn of the 17th of the month Rabi, the First of the year of Hijra 666 (*i.e.* the 8th of December A.D. 1267), the water of the river ceased to flow, so that none remained in its bed. The people hurried and kindled numerous fires and cressets, and seized the opportunity offered by the occurrence. They remedied the defects in the piers, and strengthened them, and effected repairs which would otherwise have been impossible. They then despatched mounted men to ascertain the nature of the event that had occurred. The riders urged their horses, and found that a lofty mound (Kabar), which overlooked the river on the west, had fallen into it and dammed it up. A Kabar resembles a hill, but is not actually a hill, for water will quickly disintegrate it into mud. The water was held up, and had spread itself over the valley above the dam. The messengers returned with this explanation, and the water was arrested from midnight until the fourth hour of the day. Then the water prevailed upon the dam and broke it up.'

CHAPTER IV

[1] nation.

[a] Deut. xxvii. 2.

[b] chap. iii. 12.

AND it came to pass, when all the [1] people were clean passed [a] over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto [b] Joshua, saying, 2. Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man, 3. And command you them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and [2] leave them in the lodging place, where you shall lodge *this* night. 4. Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: 5. And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: 6. That this may be a sign among you, *that* when your children ask [3] *their fathers* in time to come, saying, What mean you by these stones? 7. Then ye shall answer them, [4] That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever. 8. And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried

[2] lay them down.

[3] R.V. omits 'their fathers.'

[4] Because.

2. **Take you twelve men . . . out of every tribe a man.** Every tribe was to set up, through its representative, its memorial; the twelve stones so set up would be the national memorial of thanksgiving. For individuals or armies on a journey the setting up of stones would be all that could be done to commemorate events. For other examples, see Gen. xxviii. 18; Gen. xxxv. 14; 1 Sam. vii. 12.

8. **Unto the place where they lodged.** These rough stones placed 'on the upper terrace of the plain of Jordan' marked the first national sanctuary in the new land, and here the Tabernacle remained till it was taken to Shiloh (Joshua xviii. 1).

them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. 9. And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day. 10. For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until every thing was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hasted and passed over. 11. And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people. 12. And [c] the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them: 13. About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho. 14. On that day the LORD magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.

[c] Num. xxxii. 27.

15. And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, 16. Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that

9. And Joshua set up twelve stones. In addition to the national memorial, Joshua set up on the brink of the river where the priests had stood another memorial of the Great Miracle. These stones were of such size and so firmly fixed that they were to be seen years after when the Book of Joshua was being written (see Additional Note).

10. The people hasted. Not because they doubted God's patience, but because they desired to relieve the priests who had to stand bearing the ark till all the nation had passed over.

12. The children of Reuben. Thus they fulfilled the promise they had made.

Plains of Jericho. About seven miles wide, and at that time covered with palm trees—so Jericho—'the city of palms' (Deut. xxxiv. 3).

14. The Lord magnified Joshua. This He promised to do (cf. iii. 7), and did partly by controlling all Joshua's natural feelings, so that in the great excitement he appeared strong and calm, and partly by moving the hearts of the people towards him. This deep respect which all felt for their captain was a great help to him in facing the difficulties that were to follow.

they come up out of Jordan. 17. Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan. 18. And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, *and* the soles of the priests' feet were lift up unto the dry *land*, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as *they did* before. 19. And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth *day* of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho. 20. And those twelve stones,

[5] set up.

which they took out of Jordan, did Joshua [5]pitch in Gilgal. 21. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What *mean* these stones? 22. Then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. 23. For the LORD your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red

d Ex. xiv. 21.

sea, [d]which he dried up from before us, until we were gone over: 24. That all the people of the earth might know the

[6] they may.

hand of the LORD, that it *is* mighty: that [6]ye might fear the LORD your God for ever.

20. **In Gilgal.** See Additional Note.

LESSON IV

The Memorial

INTRODUCTION.—Begin by referring to the last lesson, and picture the excitement in the camp as the Israelites realise they are at last in the Promised Land of which they had heard so much. The new sights, *e.g.* fields of corn, etc., and the new hopes stirred up by them were likely to make them forget the great event that has happened, so Joshua is moved to erect a perpetual reminder. This will be our lesson to-day.

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. Danger of forgetfulness. Israel at last in Palestine. All are talking of the great wonders that all witnessed. Questions asked	1. Illustrate the saying 'A nine days' wonder' by showing how very soon we forget wonderful things we have seen. Even the wonders of

LESSON IV—*continued.* THE MEMORIAL

MATTER.

as to how far the river-bed was dry—how it happened? Joshua remembers the same interest about the crossing of the Red Sea, remembers, too, how soon it was forgotten. Something must be done to prevent this. So he gladly obeys the Divine command to build a memorial of the Great Miracle. So too even the Resurrection, much more marvellous, might be forgotten, so *our* Joshua makes two memorials.

2. How it was provided against.

A memorial must be of such a kind that it at once suggests the person or event of which it is a reminder. Note the suitability of Joshua's memorial of the crossing. Twelve stones taken up out of the bed of the river would always call to mind two things—(1) That the bed was once dry; (2) that Israel, represented by the Twelve Tribes, was intimately concerned with it. So the whole story would naturally be elicited. Christ's memorials of His Crossing equally suggestive.

(a) *Baptism.* Going into the water and rising out of it again suggest burial and resurrection.

(b) *Holy Communion.* The bread and wine not only reminding us of Him Who spoke of Himself as 'The Bread of Life' and 'The True Vine,' but of the bruising (bread-corn is bruised, Isa. xxviii. 28), and the crushing by which He became our Food and Sustenance.

3. Joshua's Zeal.

Joshua not only did what he was told, but something further. He desired that the tribes on the east of Jordan should have their own reminder, so he set up twelve stones to mark the spot where the Ark of the Covenant rested during that long

METHOD.

science — telegraph, phonograph, etc.—are soon forgotten. Show how events that ought not to be forgotten are commemorated by memorials — *e.g.* St. Augustine's landing, Battle of Hastings, etc.

Quote Kipling's 'Recessional' with its refrain 'Lest they forget,' and point out England's danger of forgetting responsibility in success.

Illustrate: Many memorials are statues, as those of Wellington, Nelson, Gordon, etc.

Point out the difference between the memorials of the first and second Joshua. The former simply point to what happened, the latter not only point, but convey to us that which is signified. They are means of grace as well as memorials. Show too they are acted memorials. We rehearse what is symbolised, and in both not only die with Christ, but rise, offering ourselves anew to God.

3. Show that each child has a memorial in his Christian name which reminds him that he is a member of the Risen Lord.

LESSON IV—*continued.* THE MEMORIAL

MATTER.

day when the people were passing over. So too the Church has added to the two memorials of the Lord many others for those who still are separated from the Land of Promise, *e.g.* the Lord's Day, cathedrals, churches, crosses, etc. But note the danger lest we should be more interested in the memorials than what they signify. Only one safe help here—namely, presence of the Holy Ghost, Who was sent 'to bring all things to our remembrance.'

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

The Memorial.

'Stones of memorial.'—Exod. xxviii. 12.

1. *Why needed.* Deliverance at Red Sea forgotten at Rephidim.
   So too feeding of five thousand and four thousand forgotten.
   Christ's Resurrection forgotten (1 Cor. xv. 12.)
   Divine help in accidents, illness, forgotten.
2. *The Form.* To suggest the deliverance.
   Twelve stones = National deliverance by water.
   Baptism = World's deliverance by water.
   Holy Communion = World's redemption by blood.
3. *Their Use.* Joshua's memorial aroused faith, hope, and love.
   Our Lord's memorial quickens faith, gratitude, and charity.
4. *Distinctions.* Joshua's memorial to be looked at, Christ's to be received.
   Joshua's a witness, Christ's a witness and means of grace.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO LESSON IV

Repetitions in the narrative. Just as we have different accounts of the Resurrection, so of the crossing of the Jordan we have no less than three accounts. First, it is told quite briefly in chapter iii. (verses 14-17), then more fully in chapter iv., prominence being given to the memorial erected to keep it always in mind, then again in iv. 15-18, where the chief feature of the narrative is the return of the waters directly the priests that bear the Ark reached the bank. In this way the importance of the event is impressed upon the mind.

Order in the crossing. Two points are noted—(1) The Ark with the priests that bare it went first, and at some distance from it—more than half a mile—the first detachment of soldiers. (2) The first tribe to follow the Ark was not that of Judah, whose place with Issachar and Zebulon was in the van, but Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, that their brethren might see that they intended to be faithful to their promise. Their number is here given as forty thousand, not quite half the full strength of the fighting men of these tribes, according to the Book of Numbers, but doubtless half would be left behind for the protection of the women and children.

Gilgal. Note the name was given by Joshua (cf. verse 9). It was on rising ground about five miles from the river, and two from Jericho. As it became not only Joshua's base, but the settled home of the women and children, with the Tabernacle reared in the midst, it was probably strongly fortified. Note that God did not place them in Jericho, as He might have done, but destroys it, preferring that they should live the simpler life of faith in the open camp than be exposed to the temptations of a heathen city. It is interesting to note that not only is the place still considered sacred, so that the Arabs like to bury their dead there, but there are still to be seen about a *dozen* small mounds, seemingly artificial, and one of these is called Tell Jiljûlieh. They had plenty of water, for Major Conder found that a stream ran right through these mounds.

Purpose of the miracle. (1) That it might have an effect on the heathen in producing dread and terror—that they might know the hand of the Lord that it is mighty. (2) That Israel might grow in reverence and fear of the Lord. See Joshua iv. 24.

CHAPTER V. 1-12

AND it came to pass, when all the kings of the
[1] beyond. Amorites, which *were* [1] on the side of Jordan
westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites,
[2] how. which *were* by the sea, heard [2] that the LORD had dried up
the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel,
until we were passed over, that their heart melted, neither
[3] any. was there [3] spirit in them any more, because of the children
of Israel.

2. At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make
[a] Ex. iv. 25. thee [a] sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of
Israel the second time. 3. And Joshua made him sharp
knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of
the foreskins. 4. And this is the cause why Joshua did
circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt, *that*
were males, *even* all the men of war, died in the wilderness by
[4] For. the way, after they came out of Egypt. 5. [4] Now all the
people that came out were circumcised: but all the people
that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came

1. **All the kings.** Note the last verse of chapter iv. God's purpose in working the miracle was carried out. All the heathen from east to west quickly heard of the astonishing passage of the Red Sea, and began to feel that opposition was useless. The gods were fighting for Israel, and the wonders done in Egypt were about to be repeated.

2. **At that time.** When Joshua saw that there was no danger of their being attacked, that the men of Jericho had not stirred hand or finger, but, on the contrary, were greatly alarmed, he took steps to bring Israel into covenant with God by the rite of circumcision. It was a bold act of faith, for it meant placing a large part of the whole army *hors de combat* for some days.

2. **The second time.** The last circumcision had taken place just before the rebellion of Kadesh, but since then it had ceased, as the people of Israel were considered to be under God's ban. They had made no adequate repentance for their sin, and by their wandering felt they were under God's sentence. The people as a whole then were not in covenant with God, but amongst them were many between forty and sixty years old who had been circumcised before the great rebellion, and who individually were by that rite in the covenant.

forth out of Egypt, *them* they had not circumcised. 6. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all [5] the people *that were* men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD sware that [b] *he* would not shew them the land, which the LORD sware unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey. 7. And their children, *whom* he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way. 8. And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. 9. And the LORD said unto Joshua, *This* day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.

10. And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and

[5] the nation even the.

[b] Num. xiv. 23.

9. **The reproach of Egypt.** This must mean the reproach levelled by the Egyptians against the Israelites. From such passages as Exod. xxxii. 12, Num. xiv. 13-16, and Deut. ix. 28, it is clear that their journey to Palestine had been watched with a great deal of interest by the Egyptians, who had enjoyed every reverse they heard of and made the most of it, taunting the Israelites with being forsaken by God, Who had led them out of Egypt with the purpose of destroying them. Now that they had reached the Promised Land, and settled there, the reproach was gone. The words, however, '*This day* have I rolled away,' seem to refer to something more special than the encampment, *i.e.* to the rite of circumcision which had taken place that day. This was a proof that God had not abandoned His people, at least a proof that Israel believed that He was their God.

10. **Gilgal.** This now became a sacred place, for here was the monument erected commemorating the miraculous passage over Jordan, here the covenant was renewed after forty years, and here the first celebration of the Passover in their new home.

10. **Kept the passover on the fourteenth day.** The passage of the Jordan was made on the tenth day of the first month, just in time for the celebration of the Passover. It is worthy of note that Joshua's first thought on reaching the enemy's country is not the ordering of the campaign, but the service of God. With all the temptations persuading him to take active measures at once against the enemy, he turns resolutely aside for religious services, which incapacitated the majority of his fighting men. Nothing could show better the splendid spirit of faith in which he entered upon the Conquest.

kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. 11. And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened *cakes*, and parched *corn* in the selfsame day. 12. And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

Maclear notes that 'as the night of the *first* Passover was one of terror and judgment to Egypt, so now, while within view of the camp at Gilgal, Israel was keeping the first Passover on the soil of Palestine, "Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in" (Josh. vi. 1).'

11. **Of the old corn.** At the time of the Passover, especially in the hot plain of Jericho, the corn would be ripe. It is a signal proof of the terror of the people of Jericho and of the excitement caused by the sudden crossing of Jordan that they should have left their fields of ripe corn for the enemy. Acres and acres must have been left in order to provide sufficient bread for so large a host. This first tasting of corn again after so long a period was a great event. On the 15th of Nisan the firstfruits would be waved before the Lord (Lev. xxiii. 10), and on the 16th the corn might be eaten.

12. **The manna ceased.** The sudden disappearance of the manna was as remarkable as its first appearance, and caused as much joy, for it was a clear proof that the wandering was now over, that they were henceforth to be in a position in which they could maintain themselves by the land which God had given them.

LESSON V

Peace and Security beneath the Covenants

INTRODUCTION.—Refer to last lesson. God, very pleased to see the people thankful, now wishes to bury the sin of the past forty years, and bring His people into close fellowship with Him. This the meaning of Covenant. Our lesson to-day on the renewal of the old Covenant that God had made with Abraham. But first we must see how sorely it was needed.

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. Israel in need of God's Covenant. For forty years Israel had been apparently under God's frown. Severe and constant discipline. Want of water. Serpents. Enemies. Privations. No settled home, but	1. Show clearly what a covenant is. Illustrate by covenants made between English travellers and African chiefs. Show always made by 'blood.' Chief then bound to protect the Englishman. Covenant

LESSON V—*continued.* PEACE AND SECURITY BENEATH THE COVENANTS

MATTER.	METHOD.
with it many valuable lessons. Still no Covenant, for Israel does not yet trust God, and Covenant implies trust on both sides. So the world, till Christ came and died for men, did not understand the Divine discipline, thought God hated men. A *new* Covenant needed.	removes all fear, establishes friendship. To-day we think of covenant with God.
2. Signs that a Covenant would be granted. Israel now in the Promised Land. At last at home. No more travelling. No more manna. In its place the beautiful corn. All proofs that the time of privation is over. So too the strange protection from their enemies at Jericho. Why do they not come out and attack them? All these assurances of God's favour. Now God would bring them into close fellowship with Himself.	2. Show that the Christians after the Resurrection, before the gift at Pentecost, were in the same happy condition as Israel in Gilgal, strangely free for two months from all molestation.
3. Signs that a Covenant was granted. (1.) *Circumcision.* This the old sign that Israel belonged to God, were His specially favoured children. Its discontinuance for nearly forty years must have perplexed many. Its renewal caused great joy. (2.) *The Passover.* This was a very joyous festival. Israel would contrast it with the first celebration, which was in fear, hurry, and wonder, and feel that the promises then made were now fulfilled.	3. So, too, show that baptism answers to circumcision, and that the three thousand baptized on the Day of Pentecost felt that all their fear was removed, for they were now God's children. Illustrate also by the joy the first believers knew when they received the Bread of Life (Acts ii. 46).
4. Lesson. These outward signs to assure them that God was with them and would fight for them, but not to make them lazy. Their co-operation would soon be shown to be necessary. The whole country had to be conquered, but could only be done in the confidence that God was with them	4. Speak of the blessings assured to us by Baptism and the Holy Communion, as quoted in the Catechism, and show that they are for use. We are to conquer our difficulties in the faith that they are real communications of God's grace.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

The Covenant.

'I will make with them a Covenant of Peace.'—Ezek. xxxiv. 25.

1. *A Covenant wanted.*
   Abraham's Covenant—renewed at Sinai—lost at Kadesh — Israel homeless — suffering — disheartened for forty years.
   So too the world—estranged from God for four thousand years.

2. *A Covenant expected.*
   No more manna—corn—home—protected.
   So too the veil rent—the graves opened—victory of the Cross.

3. *Covenant Symbols.*
   Circumcision—Passover.
   Baptism—Holy Communion.

4. *Covenant Blessings and Responsibilities.*
   Blessings—Protection, Peace, God's Presence.
   Responsibilities—
   (*a*) Jericho and Ai to be taken.
   (*b*) The land to be possessed.
   (*a*) 'The sin that doth most easily beset us.'
   (*b*) The whole character to be won for God.

CHAPTER V. 13-15—VI. 1-5

AND it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lift up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood [a] a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, *Art* thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14. And he said, Nay; but *as* captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? 15. And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, [b] Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy. And Joshua did so.

[a] Exod. xxiii. 23.

[b] Exod. iii. 5; Acts vii. 33.

VI. 1. Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in. 2. And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, *and* the mighty *men* of valour. 3. And ye shall compass the city, all *ye* men of

13. **Joshua was by Jericho.** He had probably walked out from the camp to examine the city and consider what plans should be adopted for taking it. A very brief examination would suffice to convince him that he had no means for taking it by assault.

There stood a man over against him. Was this an angel representing Jehovah or a manifestation of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, Jesus Christ? Opinions have differed, but the command of verse 15 seems to imply that it was our Lord. See also vi. 2, and cf. Rev. xxii. 9. Some, however, urge that this is the same Being that is mentioned in Judges ii. 1, and that that Person is, in spite of his words, simply an angel.

14. **Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord.** Our Lord answers Joshua's thought. He had not come to fight as a man for or against Israel, as Joshua had supposed, but as the Leader of the unseen host of angels. Joshua at once realised that he was in the presence of some supernatural Intelligence, a feeling deepened by the command to remove the shoes from off his feet. Cf. Exod. iii. 5.

VI. 1. **Jericho was straitly shut up.** It is not clear whether this means that Joshua had closely invested the city, or whether the fear of an assault from Israel had led the Canaanites to keep the gates closed night and day.

3. **Ye shall compass the city.** Note the Divine plan, partly ordered

war, *and* go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. 4. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven [c] trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. 5. And it shall come to pass, *that* when *they* make a long blast with the ram's horn, *and* when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout *with* a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

[c] Jubile trumpets. (marg.)

with a view to the repentance of the doomed people, partly with a view to impress Israel. (*a*) The city was to be encompassed daily by an armed host, probably consisting of the 600,000 soldiers that Joshua commanded. (*b*) The central point of attraction was not the standard or national banner, but the mysterious Ark overspread by the Cherubim, which was carried on the shoulders of the priests in the middle of the host. (*c*) The impressive character of the procession was heightened by the joyful blasts of the jubilee trumpets blown by the seven priests clothed in white linen.

If we remember that the fear of the Lord was already upon the people of Jericho (see Josh. ii. 11), and that the successful crossing of the Jordan had probably increased it, we may be sure that this strange procession round their walls, half-military, half-religious, produced an impression of solemn awe, and possibly led some to turn to the God of Israel with a like faith to that of Rahab. It is not clear whether the trumpets were blown daily; in verse 5 the command runs, 'When ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout,' implying that they were only blown on the seventh day, but in chapter vi. it is throughout implied that they were blown daily.

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO LESSON V

Trumpets of rams' horns. The intelligent reader will have been surprised at these trumpets being made of rams' horns, as they are not only solid, but would have been too small to have produced the mighty sound intended by Joshua. The R.V. still keeps this translation in the text, but in the margin has 'jubile trumpets,' *i.e.* trumpets of joyful sound—a meaning more in accord with the etymology of the Hebrew, and better suited to the context. The word for trumpet suggests that the instrument was curved and not straight. Note that they were 'not the silver trumpets used for signalling the marshalling of the host, but those used for ushering in the Jubilee and the Sabbatical Year.' They would signify that Israel was now entering into the rest that God had prepared for them.

LESSON VI

The Divine Encouragement

INTRODUCTION.—It is very important that children should recognise that God is with them in their work, and especially when they find it hard. No lesson will better impress this on their minds than that based upon the appearance of the Captain of the Lord's Host to Joshua. The child's difficulty that we do not now *see* Him should be met by reminding him that a mother's photograph, gift, or letter often brings the mother nearer than her visible presence would, and that one object of the gift of the Holy Ghost is to bring Christ to our remembrance.

MATTER.

1. When given.

The river has been crossed, but almost as great a difficulty now presents itself. Jericho, which must be taken before Israel can proceed inland, seems to Joshua naturally impregnable. A walled city with walls thick enough for houses to be built upon! Behind the walls armed men ready to fight with desperation for their homes. He has no engineer, no means for taking it by assault (cp. the siege of Jerusalem and how long it took even when beset by a Roman army). To starve it out might require months. But note, Joshua does not stay in the camp with folded arms, he is '*by Jericho*' thinking how it is to be done. And as he is doing his best, God appears to him.

2. How given.

God Himself, so it would seem, appears to Joshua. Mark the extraordinary condescension, only surpassed by the Incarnation, to which it looked forward. Note the form, as a warrior, with drawn sword. Just the form which would give Joshua confidence. Doubtless during the great procession round the doomed city he would see what no one else saw—the figure of the

METHOD.

1. Begin by showing that where some great difficulty in our work has been removed, we think all will be easy. But what does our Lord say? See S. Luke xiv. 27-33. And what follows the crossing of Jordan? We need prudence as well as enthusiasm. Prudence means carefully facing the difficulties and seeing how they may best be overcome. It is when we resolutely do this in the spirit of prayer that help most often comes. Illustrate by the revelations to Gideon when threshing wheat to save it from the enemy; to the Apostles when facing failure (S. John xxi. 3); and to Cornelius, a soldier, facing his own personal difficulty with sin (Acts x. 3, 4).

2. Illustrate by speaking of the forms in which God has appeared to encourage His faithful servants. To Abraham as a traveller (Gen. xviii. 2); to Moses in a flame of fire (Exod. iii. 2); to Isaiah as the Holy and Terrible One (Isa. vi. 1, 2); to S. John as the High Priest of the Universe (Rev. i.). In these ways He stamped on His servants' minds the message He desired to give them. So show that to us He

LESSON VI—*continued*. THE DIVINE ENCOURAGEMENT

MATTER.	METHOD.
Captain leading, as it appeared to him, by Jericho. God meets our faith more than half-way. Note, too, the message. Jericho with its great thick walls, the king, and the mighty men of valour given into Joshua's hand! He has nothing to do except to treat the gift as directed. His part to see 'the salvation of God.' As at Rephidim years ago, the work was done by faith and prayer, so now. An invisible host would throw down the walls and make the capture perfectly simple.	has revealed Himself as a Carpenter, a Teacher, a Physician, a King, and He will do all if we obey His directions.
3. **How received.** With the encouragement came a commission, strange and hard. No general was ever asked to do such a difficult task as this imposed on Joshua. To lead his army round and round the walls of Jericho, to expose them to the jeers and taunts of the enemy, and yet to restrain them from a single word of reply, from even a hymn of triumph, this was hard for a *soldier*. But Joshua has not the slightest misgiving. His outward attitude of deep reverence shows that to his eye the spiritual is more real than the material. He feels and knows that He stands in the Divine Presence, and he leaves it to go and issue at once the necessary commands. His own quiet faith here, as at the river Jordan, animates the whole host. Note also, no disappointment at the thought that nothing will be gained, neither honour nor treasure. Quite content that the glory and honour shall belong to God. The true soldier confident in his Captain's methods.	3. Show that the reception of any message depends entirely upon our ability to receive it. A child cannot receive what a grown person receives. Nor can an unbeliever receive what the man of faith receives. The messages which Joshua, Moses, Isaiah, S. Peter, S. Paul, and others received would have been ridiculed by men of the world. So note how God stimulates the power of faith, by outward form, by directions, as here, to prepare for the message (Loose thy shoe), and by the form of the message (See, I have given, etc.). So teach by this the importance of outward forms in quickening faith as well as that of unquestioning obedience directly the word is given. Conclude by showing that every one has some 'Jericho'—bad habit—difficult circumstances — to overthrow, and that if we face the difficulty and look to God He will show us how the impossible is to be done (S. Mark x. 27).

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

The Divine Encouragement.

'See, I have given into thine hand Jericho.'—Josh. vi. 2.

1. *When given.* Joshua by Jericho—thinking—facing difficulty.
   So too Cornelius, when thinking how another greater difficulty is to be overcome (Acts x. 3). No vision given to the lazy.
   So too our difficulties—self—work—removed by prayerful thought.
2. *How given.* To Joshua in the form of a soldier, for his is a soldier's work.
   To Moses—fire—his work destruction and purification.
   To Isaiah—as the Holy One—his work to teach Judah God's holiness.
   To all—as the Perfect Man in the life of a carpenter, to show sacredness of daily work—also in that of Teacher—Physician—King.
3. *How received.* (1) With reverence. Joshua fell on his face and did worship.
   (2) With careful attention. Missed not a word.
   (3) With grateful obedience.
   'Blessed are *your* eyes, for they see' (S. Matt. xiii. 16).
   'Having eyes, see ye not?' (S. Mark viii. 18.)
   Encouragements daily, but only the reverent and attentive see.

CHAPTER VI. 6-27

AND Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD. 7. And [1] he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD. 8. And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns [2] passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. 9. And the armed men went before the priests that blew *with* the trumpets, and the rereward came after the ark, *the priests* [3] going on, and blowing with the trumpets. 10. And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor [4] make any noise with your voice, neither shall *any* word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout. 11. So [5] the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about *it* once: and they came *into* the camp, and lodged in the camp. 12. And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD. 13. And [6] seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them: [7] but the rereward came after the ark of the LORD, *the priests* [3] going on, and blowing with the trumpets. 14. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned *into* the camp: so they did six days. 15. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that

[1] they.

[2] before the Lord passed on.

[3] blowing with the trumpets as they went.

[4] let your voice be heard.

[5] he caused the ark of the Lord to compass.

[6] the seven.

[7] and.

7. **They said unto the people.** The command here seems general and not special, and yet it is difficult to see how so large a host as 600,000 would have time to march round Jericho seven times on the seventh day, although verse 15 tells us that on that day they rose very early.

they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. 16. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city. 17. And the city shall be accursed, *even* it, and all that *are* therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that *are* with her in the house, because [a] she hid the messengers that we sent. 18. And you, in any wise keep *yourselves* from the [8] accursed thing, lest [9] ye make *yourselves* accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing; [10] and make the camp of Israel [11] a curse, and trouble it. 19. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, *are* [12] consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come *into* the treasury of the LORD. 20. So the people shouted [13] when *the priests* blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, [14] and the people shouted *with* a great shout, that [c] the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city. 21. And they utterly

[a] chap. ii. 4.

[8] devoted.
[9] when ye have devoted it.
[10] so should.
[11] accursed.
[12] holy.
[13] and.
[14] that . . . and the wall.
[c] Heb. xi. 30.

16. **Joshua said unto the people.** Apparently a halt was made at the end of the sixth round, and Joshua then issued final instructions. Up to that time it would seem that the host and the people remained in ignorance as to when the city would fall.

17. **The city shall be accursed**—*i.e.* devoted, cut off from God's care, and therefore 'doomed' (see 2 Thess. i. 9, 'Punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power'). The people of Jericho had for years sinned outrageously against the teaching God had given them in their conscience. They had thrown off God's yoke, and now He left them to themselves, a prey to the avenging Angels of Justice. But even in Jericho mercy found a place in the house of Rahab. No more signal proof of God's discriminating compassion could be seen than the piece of wall on which Rahab's house was built still standing amidst a general heap of ruins.

21. **Ox and sheep and ass.*** All was destroyed in this case, except

* Note the slaughter of the cattle, which was unusual in the destruction of a heathen city. It marked, of course, the ban or curse which lay upon the city, and it is not improbable that whilst they remained in the hot district of Gilgal flesh meat would have proved a cause of sickness. See, however, vii. 27.

destroyed all that *was* in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword. 22. But Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go *into* the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, [d] as ye sware unto her. 23. And the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and [15] left them without the camp of Israel. 24. And they burnt the city with fire, and all that *was* therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put *into* the treasury of the house of the LORD. 25. And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she [16] dwelleth in Israel *even* unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. 26. And Joshua [17] adjured *them* at that time, saying, [e] Cursed *be* the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: [18] he shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and [19] in his youngest *son* shall he set up the gates of it. 27. So the LORD was with Joshua; and his fame was *noised* [f] throughout all the country.

d chap. ii. 14; Heb. xi. 31.

15 they set.

16 dwelt.

17 charged them with an oath.

e 1 Kings xvi. 34.

18 with the loss of his firstborn.

19 with the loss of his.

f in all the land.

the gold and silver, which were brought into the treasury of the sanctuary that the religious character of the war might be indelibly stamped upon the mind of the people. Had the Crusades been conducted in this spirit, Palestine would not now be Mohammedan.

23. **Left them without the camp.** As heathen they were unclean, and therefore they must abide as strangers until such time as they could become members of the Jewish Church. Rahab, as we have already noted, married Salmon of the tribe of Judah, and became ancestress to David and David's 'greater Son.'

25. **She dwelleth in Israel unto this day,**—*i.e.* Her family are still living amongst us. 'The words are rightly noted as implying the narrative was written not long after the occurrences which it records' (*Speaker's Commentary*).

26. **Adjured them.** Commentators have noticed the rhythmical character of the oath, and explained it on the ground that so it would be more easily remembered by the people.

Buildeth this city. Joshua desired that the lesson of God's vengeance

upon unrepented sin so powerfully taught by the ruins of Jericho should never be effaced, so he laid a ban upon it, and on the man who should presumptuously try to rebuild it. For years the oath was respected; but in the ungodly, careless days of Ahab one named Hiel began to rebuild, and so to incur the imprecation. Whilst the foundations were being laid he lost his eldest son Abiram; and when the gates were being set up, his youngest son Segub (1 Kings xvi. 34). Five hundred years had passed by, but Joshua's word had not been forgotten. Sayce goes further, and thinks that the phrase in 1 Kings xvi. 34 implies that Hiel lost all his other sons whilst the city was building.

LESSON VII

National Faith

(Joshua vi. 6-27.)

INTRODUCTION.—Explain the words 'National Faith,' and show that nations, like individuals, get possessed by a spirit of faith or confidence. When this is the case they are practically invincible, in spite of smallness of numbers, *e.g.*, Holland against France in the seventeenth century. This faith is due to the inspiration of great men, *e.g.*, that of the Dutch to William of Orange. So England's faith in liberty, justice, and truth has been aroused by such men as Langton, Simon de Montfort, Hampden, etc., and at a crisis has been greatly helped by some outward symbol, *e.g.*, the cross that King Oswald planted at Heavenfield, the sacred standards flying from a pole fixed in a four-wheel car at the battle of the Standard. So here, long ago, in Joshua's time, we see the same thing, Joshua's confidence and the Ark, symbolising the Divine Presence. Our lesson to-day on National Faith.

MATTER.

1. How aroused.

Note how Joshua's calm confidence communicated itself to his officers, and from them to the host. No questioning, no doubt, all is arranged in order of battle, and yet no assault is to be made till the walls fall down. So in the New Testament, see Acts iv. 13-31, for a like exhibition of faith, followed by enthusiasm. A man of faith can do far more than a man of intellect. Note also the presence of the Ark of the Covenant, this a symbol of God's Presence; but, mark, this may awaken national spirit, but will not carry to victory unless leaders and men have genuine faith (1 Sam. iv. 5 and following).

METHOD.

1. Show that as a nation's faith depends on its men, so the faith of a school on its boys. One faithful boy can change the tone of a school. Illustration: The boy, said to be Dean Stanley, who by praying openly led all his dormitory to do it, and the English clerk in America who formed a Bible class through the desire awakened in those who saw him reading his Bible. Show the influence of passive faith by the power of S. Paul's example in Rome though a prisoner (Phil. i. 12-14).

LESSON VII—*continued.* NATIONAL FAITH

MATTER.	METHOD.
2. **How expressed.** Describe the marshalling of Joshua's procession. First, armed host, then the trumpeters, clad in the white linen garments of the priests, then the Ark of the Lord, then a rearguard of chosen soldiers. Nothing heard but the tramp of the feet. The silent hush must have filled some of those looking on from the walls of Jericho with alarm. One family at least was greatly impressed. Note that faith is always quiet, free from boast and bluster. It has no trust in itself. Here, as at the Red Sea, it waits '*to see the salvation of God.*'	2. Show by illustrations, *e.g.* the Queen's Jubilee, that national faith expresses itself in great gatherings, orderly processions, so men learn that their own faith is shared by others, and they grow confident of success. They not only impress those who take part in them, but also those who witness them. Show also the importance of silence till the right moment comes.
3. **Its invincible character.** 'By faith the walls of Jericho fell down flat.' Note the procession day after day till the seventh or Sabbath day; then the loud peal of the trumpets, the mighty shout, the awful shaking and tumbling of the mighty walls, and the cry of despair as Jericho's mighty men realise their disaster. Scripture gives no other account as to how it happened except this, that it took place by faith. Faith set all in motion, and without it it would never have taken place at all.	3. Show that real faith movements are invincible; that of the Barons under Langton, of the lay evangelists under Wesley, carry all before them (1 John v. 4), but note how they often depend on one person to arouse them. A great thing to be a leader of faith like those mentioned in Heb. xi.
4. **How to maintain it.** Joshua was not content with arousing this faith for one great occasion; but by keeping the people in Gilgal, where there was daily worship and instruction, he nourished and strengthened what he had roused.	4. Conclude by teaching the importance of the prayers for the Queen, the Royal Family, Parliament, the Nobility, the Magistrates, for only by prayer and worship is national faith kept alive. But prayer must be intelligent, and needs the constant instruction of God's Holy Word. Hence the importance of daily Bible reading. A nation will quickly perish without faith, and faith is sustained by Prayer, Praise, the Bible, and the Sacraments.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

National Faith.

1. *How aroused.* Faith of one rouses thousands.
   So Joshua—the officers—the host.
   So S. Paul—a prisoner—in Rome—Nero's palace, and many other places.
   So Wesley when England was dying.
   So Wilberforce at time of slave-trade.

2. *How expressed.* By united action and devotion.
   So Joshua's directions for order, reverence, devotion, and faith.
   So the Book of Common Prayer expresses England's national faith. Provides for united prayer and praise.

3. *Its invincible character.* 'By faith the walls of Jericho fell down flat.'
   So by faith England triumphed over the tyranny of John.
   By faith England shook off the slave-trade.
   By faith England could break the chains of drink.

4. *How to maintain it.*
   By Prayer—so State Prayers.
   By God's Word—so daily reading of Bible in Church.
   By Praise—so daily Psalms.
   By the Sacraments, which bind the people together, and impart the Life and Spirit of Christ.

CHAPTER VII

[1] devoted.
[a] chap. xxii. 20; 1 Chron. ii. 7.

BUT the children of Israel committed a trespass in the [1] accursed thing: for [a] Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the [1] accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel. 2. And Joshua sent men from Jericho *to* Ai, which *is* beside Beth-aven, on the east side of Beth-el, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and [2] view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. 3. And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; *but* let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; *and* make not all the people to labour thither; for they *are but* few. 4. So there went up thither of the people about three

[2] spy out.

1. **The children of Israel committed a trespass.** We must not suppose from this that all the people of Israel were filled with the spirit of covetousness which destroyed Achan, but that his act of sacrilege had not only disgraced the nation, but involved them in sin. The sin of one member of a family or nation attaches to all, until all have by some act dissociated themselves from it, 'Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it' (1 Cor. xii. 26). So S. Paul regards the Church of Corinth as responsible for the sin of one of its members (see 1 Cor. v.).

In the accursed thing. As all was devoted to God, Achan's sin was sacrilege, *i.e.* a sin like that of stealing money out of the alms-box or the Communion plate.

2. **Jericho to Ai.** Ai, *i.e.* the stone heap, is placed about ten miles N.W. of Jericho. But as Jericho lies about one thousand feet below the Mediterranean Sea, and Ai about two thousand feet above, the march would mean a stiff climb of three thousand feet. It was an important place in those days, not only in itself, as being the residence of the king of that district, but as commanding one of the chief routes from Jericho into the interior of the country. As showing the accuracy of the narrative, note the phrases '*go up*,' 'make not all the people *to labour thither*.' At the time the book was written, Bethaven and Bethel were both better known than Ai, Bethel having many religious associations connected with it. Ai was probably never rebuilt after its destruction by Joshua.

3. **Let not all the people go up.** Note the confident tone of the spies. After Jericho, Ai seemed to be an easy prize.

thousand men : and they fled before the men of Ai. 5. And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men : [3] for they chased them *from* before the gate *even* unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down : wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water. [3 and.]

6. And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. 7. And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord GOD, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us ? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the *other* side Jordan ! 8. O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth *their* backs before their enemies ! 9. For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear *of it*, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth : and what wilt thou do [4] unto thy great name ? [4 for.] 10. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up ; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face ? 11. Israel hath sinned, [5] and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them : [5] for they have even taken of the [1] accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, [5 yea.]

5. **They chased them from before the gate.** The small force of Israelites had fallen before the sortie of the men of Ai, and thirty-six men had been slain between Ai and Shebarim, *i.e.* 'the stone quarries,' in a place called the 'going down,' probably some steep cliff-like place where the descent was dangerous.

The hearts of the people melted. . . . Joshua rent his clothes. It was not the greatness of the defeat, but the painful fact that God, their Invincible Captain, had not been with them. For some reason God had deserted them. So Joshua and the elders humble themselves before the Presence of God.

7. **Alas ! O Lord God.** The prayer shows a lack of confidence in God's goodness. Instead of saying, 'What have *we* done ? show us our sin that we may repent of it,' he complains of God as though He were responsible for the defeat. Hence the sharp rebuke, 'Get thee up ; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face ?'

11. **Israel hath sinned.** God does not tell Joshua who the guilty ones are, in order that the whole people through the process of lots may realise the shame of the sin, and express their abhorrence of it.

and they have put *it* even amongst their own stuff. 12. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies,
6 are become. because they [6] were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the [1] accursed from amongst you. 13. Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *There is* an [1] accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the [1] accursed thing from among you. 14. In
7 near by. the morning therefore ye shall be brought [7] according to your tribes: and it shall be, *that* the tribe which the LORD taketh shall come [7] according to the families *thereof*: and
8 *add* near. the family which the LORD shall take shall come [8] by households: and the household which the LORD shall take shall come [8] man by man. 15. And it shall be, *that* he that is taken with the [1] accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel.

16. So Joshua rose up early in the morning, and brought Israel by their tribes; and the tribe of Judah was taken: 17. And he brought [8] the family of Judah; and he took the family of the Zarhites: and he brought [8] the family of the

13. **Up, sanctify the people.** A special religious preparation is demanded, as before the crossing of the Jordan, for the political future of the people depended upon their realisation of the sin. For national penitence, as for national faith, religious devotion is necessary.

14. **According to your tribes.** 'Each tribe was divided into *families*, each family into *houses*, each house into *persons*' (Maclear).

15. **He hath transgressed . . . and wrought folly.** The double character of the sin—(*a*) Breach of fellowship with God; (*b*) Foolishness.

16. **The tribe of Judah was taken.** We are not told how this was done, whether by lots or in any other way. Lots are said to be cast or *drawn* as from a bowl. Both expressions are used in the Old Testament. See Josh. xviii. 10, 'to cast lots,' and Num. xxxiii. 54, 'the lot came forth.' Perhaps the Homeric method of shaking out lots from a helmet was adopted. In any case, the proceedings must have been very solemn, and the shame must have deepened as the cause of the guilt was narrowed down.

Zarhites man by man ; and Zabdi was taken : 18. And he brought [8] his household man by man ; and Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken. 19. And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him ; and tell me now what thou hast done ; hide *it* not from me. 20. And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done : 21. When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish [9] garment, and two hundred shekels *of* silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them ; and behold, they *are* hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it. 22. So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent ; and, behold, *it was* hid in his tent, and the silver under it. 23. And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua,

[8] mantle.

19. **My son, give . . . glory to the Lord,** *i.e.* justify His character. A remarkable expression ! But note in explanation that God's character had suffered both in Israel and amongst the Canaanites. Even Joshua, as we have seen, thought God was to blame. By an open confession His dealings with Israel would be made clear and understood. So every confession is a vindication of God's holy Name. See Ps. li. 4, 'Against thee, thee only, have I sinned . . . that Thou mightest be *justified* when thou speakest, and *be clear* when thou judgest.' Cf. 1 Sam. vi. 5. The priests and diviners of Israel recommend the Philistines to give glory to the God of Israel by sending Him a trespass offering, *i.e.* by confessing their guilt. See also John ix. 24, where the expression occurs as a solemn charge to the man that was blind to declare the whole truth.

20. **Indeed I have sinned.** Achan now realised the gravity of his sin, and made a full confession. First he 'saw,' then he 'coveted,' then he 'took,' then he 'hid,' so he lays bare all, from the 'genesis' of his sin to its completion.

21. **A goodly Babylonish garment.** The Assyrians were famous for the manufacture of beautiful robes (Ezek. xxiii. 13) ; and as Jericho was on the road from Assyria to Egypt, we are not surprised that it should be found there, probably bought by the king or some member of his court (see Additional Note).

A wedge of gold. Not a rough piece of solid gold, but 'a tongue-shaped jewel made of gold,' perhaps used as a spoon. Its weight was about twenty-five ounces, *i.e.* equal to that of one hundred sovereigns.

23. **Laid them out.** The scene must have been a striking one. All Israel was gathered in a square about the sanctuary containing the Ark,

and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD. 24. And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them [10] *unto* the valley of Achor. 25. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him *with* stones and burned them with [11] fire, after they had stoned them with stones. 26. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day.

[10] *add* up.

[11] fire, and stoned.

in front of which stood Joshua and the condemned man, his family, and all that he had. The stolen goods are brought from the tent and laid before the Ark, and then a procession is formed to the valley of Achor, probably some desolate rocky place abounding in stones, where the Divine sentence is carried out. It is said that Jewish stoning was carried out by first flinging the victim over a small height, and then pounding him to death with stones. The traditional stoning place outside Jerusalem bears out this idea, as there is a small cliff there.

25. **All Israel stoned him . . . burned them with fire.** There seems to be no sufficient reason for believing that only Achan was stoned. He, the author of the mischief, was put to death first, and the others afterwards. His children must have been privy to the sin, and so suffered with him for it. The punishment of stoning for idolatry (Deut. xiii. 10), and specially Molech worship (Lev. xx. 2), for necromancy (Lev. xx. 27), and blasphemy (Lev. xxiv. 14), was very suitable, as virtually compelled all the people to attend and inflict the sentence.

LESSON VIII

Covetousness

INTRODUCTION.—Review briefly the last lesson. Picture the joyful surprise at what God had done for them. The great city in ruins. The enemy completely vanquished. Everything possible now. Ai—a few miles off—will be easily taken. Three thousand men quite sufficient for the attack. Sudden shock. The people of God defeated—thirty-six slain. What has happened? Joshua perplexed and almost in despair—so too the elders—so too Israel.

One family alone conscience-stricken. Why? To-day we look at the sin which has caused all this trouble.

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. The Sin.	1. Show the danger of using the
In the assault on the city wonder-	eyes wrongly, and quote our Lord's

LESSON VIII—*continued.* COVETOUSNESS

MATTER.	METHOD.
ful things seen in the houses—the palace of the king. Many looked with longing eyes, but restrained themselves. Why? See the stern command (Josh. vi. 18). The desire too strong for one man. He sees a beautiful garment—too good to be burned—no one will know. He sees —he covets—he takes (Josh. vii. 21). If one thing, then others—so the silver—the gold. So looking leads to coveting—coveting to taking—taking to hiding (deception). From whom was he taking? Is it possible to do so now? See Mal. iii. 8.	words, 'If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out.' Give other examples of the same sin—Ahab, Judas. Sin is the parent of other sins. 'When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.' Set your affection on things above (Col. iii. 2) is the antidote.
2. **Consequences.** We have seen some of the consequences, now look at others. Achan beginning to feel afraid as questions are asked, 'Why has God not gone with us to Ai?' More afraid as the rumour runs through the camp, 'Some one has taken of the accursed thing.' Yet he thinks it cannot be found out, no one knows. But see, all are to be gathered together, and a lot is to be taken. The sin is with Judah. Judah amazed and angry as the sin is traced to the Zarhites—the Zarhites covered with confusion as it is traced to the aged Zabdi—and at last to his grandson Achan. Joshua now face to face with the guilty man. Note the tenderness of the appeal and its success. Achan confesses. Breathless silence whilst investigation is made. An angry murmur runs through the camp as men are seen hurrying with the garment and the gold. How different it looks now! Why did he ever care for it? The awful sentence —the sad procession to the valley of Achor—first Achan—then the accursed things—then his sons—daughters—oxen—asses—sheep—even his tent and every article of furniture in it. The execution—all stoned—all burnt—all covered with stones.	2. A good opportunity here for picture-making. (*a*) *The scene in the Tabernacle.*—Joshua on his knees wondering why God has thus dealt with them—then in amazement as he learns Israel, and not God, is at fault. (*b*) *The scene in the Camp.*—Whole nation gathered together—the tribes —families—round the Tabernacle. Joshua and priesthood in the middle —all asking where is the sin? Remind the children of another scene —twelve men accused of betrayal—Is it I? Here point out the consequences —(*a*) Misery of the discovery; (*b*) hideousness of the sin (Job xiii. 12); (*c*) Judgment of public opinion. Many families hold him guilty of the blood of their friends; (*d*) Judgment of God (Rom. vi. 23). Confession does not save from the earthly penalty of sin. This necessary for the sake of others.

LESSON VIII—*continued.* COVETOUSNESS

MATTER.	METHOD.
3. How to be met. When the sinner was discovered, only one thing to do—to give glory to God—to clear His Name, which had been blasphemed, by confession. This Achan does.	3. Here show how the penitent robber does what he can—confesses —'We indeed justly'—and prays, 'Lord, remember me.'
4. How atoned for. No confession can of itself atone for the sin, but if united to the atonement of Christ, it avails. Natural to believe that Achan, though he suffered destruction in the flesh, was saved in the spirit (1 Cor. v. 5). The Valley of Achor became a door of hope, not condemnation (Hos. ii. 15).	4. Here show that even the penitent robber suffered agonies after he was forgiven. Forgiveness is one thing, the purification of the character through pain another. Conclude by showing how common a sin covetousness is, and how easily it begins.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Covetousness.

'Take heed, and beware of covetousness.'—S. Luke xii. 15.

1. **Character.**
   Desiring to have that which belongs to others.
   Ahab — Naboth's vineyard. Judas — the money devoted to the poor.
   Achan—the Babylonish garment.
   Breach of the Tenth Commandment.
2. **Consequences.**
   Immediate.—Deception. Shame. Loss of self-respect.
   Ultimate.—Discovery—'Be sure your sin will find you out.'
   Hideousness of the sin. 'Your remembrances are like unto ashes.'
   Judgment of man. Israel's indignation. Shame of his family and tribe.
   Judgment of God. Death: 'The wages of sin is death.'
3. **How to be met.**
   Confession.—'Give glory to God.'
   'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.'
   Submission to penalty.—'We indeed justly.'
   Prayer.—'Lord, remember me.'
4. **Atoned for.**
   'Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree' (1 Pet. ii. 24).
   'To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.'
   'Destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.'

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO LESSON VIII

Sayce (*Early History of the Hebrews*, p. 251) finds in the mention of the 'goodly Babylonish garment' indications of date and accuracy. 'For centuries Babylonia had been the home of weavers and embroiderers whose fabrics were famous all over the East. The cuneiform tablets contain long lists of articles of clothing, each of which had its own name; and, as we learn from the Tel el-Amarna correspondence, the merchants of Babylonia found a ready market for their goods in the cities of Canaan. The age of the Exodus marks the period when the old peaceful intercourse with Babylonia was coming to an end; alien peoples had barred the road across the Euphrates; and Babylon itself was about to fall into the hands of an Assyrian conqueror. Henceforth it was Assyria, and not Babylonia, whose name was known or feared in Palestine, and the writer of a later day would have spoken of the wares of Assyria rather than those of the Babylonians.' He also tells us that Dr. Schliemann, in his explorations of the 'Third Prehistoric City' of Troy, found there six tongue-like wedges of silver.

CHAPTER VIII. 1-29

[a] Deut. i. 21, and vii. 18.

AND the LORD said unto Joshua, [a] Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up *to* Ai: see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land: 2. And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as [b] chap. vi. 21. thou didst unto [b] Jericho and her king: only the spoil [c] Deut. xx. 14. thereof, and [c] the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it. 3. So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up *against* Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty *men* of valour, and sent them away by night. 4. And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, *even* behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready: 5. And I, and all the people that *are* with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, that we will flee before them, 6. (For they will come out after us) till we have drawn them from the city; for they

1. **Fear not, neither be thou dismayed.** The defeat, the exposure of the sin, the judgment upon it had naturally depressed Joshua and thrown a gloom over the camp. To remove this, God not only speaks to Joshua, but bids him adopt measures which may put heart into the people. So 'all the people of war' are to be taken, and 'an ambush is to be laid behind the city.' The people's faith and expectation must be aroused, for without faith God can do no mighty works for His chosen people. Note how God varies His methods with His servants; Gideon has too many men for the work that lies before him, and Joshua too few.

3. **Thirty thousand men of valour.** See verse 12, 'He took about *five* thousand men and set them to lie in ambush.' It is difficult to account for the variation here noted. Were the five thousand sent to encourage and help the thirty thousand, as some have thought? This does not seem likely, as such a number would be too large for the purpose, the number of souls in Ai being only 12,000; and, further, it is difficult to see how such a large force as 35,000 men could lie hid between Bethel and Ai, places only three miles apart, and friendly with one another. It is probable that a slight mistake in one Hebrew letter in verse 3 is accountable for the difficulty, and that we should read 5000 instead of 30,000 (see Additional Note).

will say, *They* flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them. 7. Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand. 8. And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, *that* ye shall set the city on fire: according to the commandment of the LORD shall ye do. See, I have commanded you. 9. Joshua therefore sent them forth: and they went to [1] lie in ambush, and abode between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of Ai: but Joshua lodged that night among the people. 10. And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and [2] numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people *to* Ai. 11. And all the people, *even the people* of war that *were* with him, went up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north side of Ai: now *there was* a valley between [3] them and Ai. 12. And he took about five thousand men, and set them [4] to lie in ambush between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of the city. 13. [5] And when they had set the people, *even* all the host that *was* on the north of the city, and their liers in wait [6] on the west of the city, [7] Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley. 14. And it came to pass, when the king of Ai saw *it*, that they hasted and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to

[1] the ambushment.
[2] mustered.
[3] him.
[4] R.V. *omits* to lie.
[5] So they set.
[6] that were.
[7] and Joshua.

10. **Numbered the people**—*i.e.* He reviewed them, saw that all was ready for the march and battle.

12. **He took.**—*i.e.* He had taken.

13. **When they had set the people . . . Joshua went that night.** When Joshua knew that the ambuscade was properly placed behind the city, and the main part of the host entrenched amongst the hills in the front, he with a few chosen men went boldly into the midst of the valley that was overlooked by Ai to attract attention. The next verse shows us how successful this was. The king of Ai, thinking another attack was intended, hasted to march against Joshua.

14. **At a time appointed, before the plain.** Rather, 'to the place appointed before the Arabah.' The words 'before the Arabah' define the place as being the entrance of the depressed tract of land which runs down to the Jordan valley. They are chiefly interesting, as showing how indelibly the whole scene was printed on the mind of the writer, who was probably watching all from the place where the host was intrenched.

[8] to the place appointed.
[9] Arabah.
[10] was an ambush.

battle, he and all his people, [8] at a time appointed, before the [9] plain ; but he wist not that *there* [10] *were* liers in ambush against him behind the city. 15. And Joshua and all Israel *made as if they* were beaten before them, and fled *by* the way of the wilderness. 16. And all the people that

[11] the city.

were in [11] Ai were called *together* to pursue after them : and they pursued after Joshua, and were drawn away from the city. 17. And there was not a man left in Ai or Beth-el, that went not out after Israel : and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel. 18. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Stretch out the spear that *is* in thy hand toward Ai ; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that *he had* in his hand toward the city. 19. And the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as *he* had stretched out his hand : and they entered *into* the city, and took it, and hasted and set the city on fire. 20. And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and, behold, the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that way : and the people that fled *to* the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers. 21. And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai. 22. And the other issued out of the city against them ; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side :

d Deut. vii. 2.

and they smote them, so that *they* [d] let none of them remain or escape. 23. And the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua. 24. And it came to pass, when

17. **Or Bethel.** The men of Bethel were delighted to assist in the pursuit of the Israelites. Their absence made the minds of the men forming the ambuscade perfectly easy, as there was now no armed force in their rear. Nothing is said to show that Bethel was now taken, though why it was not it is difficult to say. From Josh. xii. 9-16 its capture would seem to be later.

18. **Stretch out the spear.** Joshua, directly he saw that the feint was successful, ascended some height where he could be seen, and gave to the 'liers in wait' the appointed signal.

Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and *when* they were all fallen on the edge of the sword, until they were consumed, that all the Israelites returned *unto* Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword. 25. And [12] *so* it was, *that* all that fell that day, both of men and women, *were* twelve thousand, *even* all the men of Ai. 26. For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until *he* had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. 27. [e] Only the cattle and the spoil of that city Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the LORD which he [f] commanded Joshua. 28. And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever, *even* a desolation unto this day. 29. And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded [13] that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, [g] and [14] raise thereon a great heap of stones, *that remaineth* unto this day.

[12] R.V. *omits* so it was that.

[e] Num. xxxi. 22, 26.

[f] verse 2.

[13] and they took.

[g] chap. vii. 25.
[14] raised.

28. **Made it an heap for ever**—*i.e.* Made it a Tel for ever. The site of Ai, we are told, is called by the people of the neighbourhood simply 'Et Tel,' *i.e.* 'The Heap,' without any further definition.

29. **As soon as the sun was down.** It was a characteristic of the merciful side of the Law that no one's body, not even that of a criminal, should '*remain all night upon the tree.*'

LESSON IX

Conditions of Success

INTRODUCTION.—This chapter gives a very good opportunity for teaching the children the only conditions on which success is possible. Refer to last lesson, and show how Israel was depressed by failure. She failed in herself, and failed in her work. God now commands her to try again. She has judged her sin, has put it away, and now is free to act. But how can she achieve success?

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. Assurance. Israel out of heart, as a family would be after the sentence of one	1. Show that for any success the first condition is hope, and explain S. Paul's words, 'Saved by hope.'

LESSON IX—*continued.* CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS

MATTER.

of their members for crime. So God sends a message of encouragement to Joshua. As a pledge that the past is completely forgiven, this time the spoil of Ai is to be 'for a prey unto Israel.' The camp very much in heart by this merciful encouragement.

2. Prudence or Planning.

Though God told Joshua that Ai with its king would be given into his hand, he is not to be careless about the means to be adopted for taking it. God suggests the plan, Joshua is to work it out. First a body of 5000 men to be led silently up the steep gorge to the ravine west of Ai, then the king of Ai to be persuaded to attack.

3. Taking pains.

When Joshua has his plan carefully matured, he takes great pains in carrying it out. He selects the very best men for the ambuscade—men of courage and self-control. (2) He reviews the host that is to feign flight, doubtless carefully explaining what their part is to be. (3) He goes over the ground personally, takes the most exposed position, and himself directs every movement. Though he has the promise of ultimate victory, he leaves no stone unturned that is likely to be of use. Contrast the battle of Ai with the fall of Jericho—here so much to be done, and there nothing—and note that where God expects work, He always gives reward. At Jericho all is destroyed, but here the spoil is given into their hand.

4. Thoroughness.

'Joshua drew not his hand back until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.' Joshua, not content with burning the town and obtaining the spoil, but pursued till the king was taken prisoner and all the inhabitants destroyed. From

METHOD.

So the greatest commanders have been men of hope.

Whether conquest of self or conquest of work, we must first believe in its possibility.

2. Hope the first, prudence the second requisite. Show that prudence implies the careful consideration of the methods by which the work is to be done. The boy who wins prizes plans out his time and his work.

3. Show that while hope inspires and prudence plans, it is the patient taking of pains that really achieves success.

Illustrate by Marlborough, Wellington, the Sirdar. Of Marlborough it is said, 'His capacity for business was immense. He would spend a whole day in reconnoitring, and at Blenheim was on horseback for fifteen hours.'

Quote Carlyle's definition of genius as 'the infinite capacity for taking pains.'

4. Show how at first the work of conquering difficulties is interesting; but as body and mind grow tired, there is a temptation to be content with half a victory. So with work, so with conquest of sins.

Quote the great example, 'I must work,' etc., and show how all His

LESSON IX—*continued.* CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS

MATTER.

verse 13, we know that he had been up all night, and it would have been natural to have rested content with the defeat of the enemy, but his energy stays not until the work is finished. The effect of this on the enemy is seen in chapter ix.; its effect on Israel was almost greater. It gave the nation again a sense of invincible faith and courage.

METHOD.

works and all His teaching were stamped with thoroughness. Everything was properly 'finished.'

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Conditions of Success.

1. *Assurance.* 'We are saved by hope.'

'The paramount duty which Heaven lays
For its own honour on man's suffering heart.'

Wordsworth.

So Christ meets the Apostles after their great failure with a new Commission, full of hope.

'As My Father hath sent Me, so send I you.'

2. *Prudence.* Prudence, that virtue by which we face the difficulties of the future.

God suggests what is to be done, Joshua works it out.

'Grant that we may both perceive and know what things we ought to do.'

3. *Taking pains.* Selection of best material. Careful disposition of it. Personal superintendence.

'Genius the infinite capacity for taking pains.'

4. *Thoroughness.* 'Joshua drew not his hand back until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.'

'I must work the works of Him that sent Me while it is day' (S. John ix. 4).

Thoroughness characterised all Christ's works, whether healing or teaching.

All marked—'It is finished.'

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO LESSON IX

Ai. Ai has been identified by the Palestine Fund explorers with Haiyân, immediately south of a conspicuous stone mound called Et Tel, 'The Mound.' Here were found large rock-hewn reservoirs with tombs and cisterns, which proved that the place was once important. Bethel lies two miles to the west, and between Bethel and Haiyân there is an open ravine called the Valley of the City, the very place for an ambush to hide in. This ravine curves round to the east of Haiyân, and then runs to Jericho. 'In some places it becomes a narrow gorge with cliffs 800 feet high, quite concealed from all observation.' Up this gorge then Joshua led his 5000 men, placing them in the ravine west of Haiyân, where they awaited his signal before making a dash for the city. (Cf. Harper, *Bible and Modern Discoveries*, p. 151.)

CHAPTER IX

AND it came to pass, when all the kings which *were* [1] on *this* side Jordan, in the [2] hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of the great sea over against Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard *thereof*; 2. That they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, *with* one accord. 3. [3] And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, 4. They did work wilily, and went and

[1] beyond Jordan.
[2] hill country, and in the lowland.
[3] But.

1. **And it came to pass, when all the kings.** Individual cities with their kings had fallen before the power of Israel, the hope of the Canaanites now lay in combination. Lowlanders, like the Canaanites, join league with the mountaineers, the Amorites, and the dwellers in open cities like the Perizzites with the Jebusites, inhabitants of walled fortified places. All are banded together to stay, if possible, the victorious march of the host of God. They put aside their own differences and disputes to withstand, 'with one accord,' this powerful invasion. To these four nations the Hivites were joined.

3. **Gibeon.** Gibeon was a Hivite city, but had an independent political life of its own, apparently of a republican character, with elders as rulers (Josh. ix. 11), and not kings. Though not a royal city, it was a great city (Josh. x. 2) probably in size, and certainly in importance; for standing as it did at the summit of the pass of Bethhoron, it practically commanded the chief road in Central Palestine from the east to the west coast. Its name was derived from its position, meaning a city belonging to or built on a hill. It was situated about five miles north of Jerusalem.

4. **They did work wilily.** The utter destruction of Jericho and Ai had caused such consternation that the Gibeonites did not venture to throw themselves on the mercy of Joshua, for they feared that they would be destroyed if they made proposals of peace directly. They must appear to have no connection with the Canaanites, and so feigned to come from a far land.

Made as if they had been ambassadors. Another reading adopted by the Revisers in the margin is '*provided themselves with victuals.*' This adds point to the narrative, for provisions would not be necessary for the little journey the Gibeonites would have to take from their city to the camp of Israel.

Old sacks, that is, old saddle-bags, into which would be put all that was necessary for camping out.

4. **Wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up.** A description which shows plainly that they were not glass bottles, but wine-skins, with holes that had been patched over.

Clouted. See Additional Notes.

made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks
[4] skins. upon their asses, and wine [4] bottles, old, and rent, and
bound up; 5. And old shoes and clouted upon their feet,
and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their
[5] and was become. provision was dry [5] *and* mouldy. 6. And they went to
Joshua unto the camp *at* Gilgal, and said unto him, and to
the men of Israel, We be come from a far country; now
[6] covenant. therefore make ye a [6] league with us. 7. And the men of
Israel said unto the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among
[a] Ex. xxiii. 32; Deut. vii. 2, and xx. 16; Judg. ii. 2. us; [a] and how shall we make a [6] league with you? 8. And
they said unto Joshua, We *are* thy servants. And Joshua
said unto them, Who *are* ye? and from whence come ye?
9. And they said unto him, From a very far country thy
servants are come because of the name of the LORD thy
God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he
did in Egypt, 10. And all that he did to the two kings of
the Amorites, that *were* beyond Jordan, to Sihon king
of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which *was* at
Ashtaroth. 11. Wherefore our elders and all the in-
[7] provision in your hand. habitants of our country spake to us, saying, Take [7] victuals
with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say
unto them, We *are* your servants: therefore now make ye
a [6] league with us. 12. This our bread we took hot for our
provision out of our houses on the day we came forth to
go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy:
13. And these bottles of wine, which we filled, *were* new;

6. **Gilgal.** This seems to show that we are right in postponing the ratification of the law at Shechem till after the events of the next chapter, for it is not likely that they would return from Shechem to Gilgal, and not probable that we are to understand another Gilgal. After the destruction of Ai, Joshua would naturally go back to Gilgal.

7. **The Hivites.** They were not only dealing deceitfully with Joshua, but with their old friends the Canaanites, etc., with whom they had just entered into league and covenant.

How shall we make a league? This was forbidden, for these heathen peoples were to be utterly destroyed (Exod. xxiii. 32). Some mercy would doubtless have been shown them if they had been perfectly honest in their dealings with Joshua.

and, behold, they be rent: and these our garments and our shoes are become old by reason of the very long journey. 14. [b] And the men took of their [8] victuals, and [c] asked not *counsel* at the mouth of the LORD. 15. And Joshua made peace with them, and made a [6] league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them.

[b] Gen. xxxi. 46.
[8] provision.
[c] Num. xxvii. 21.

16. And it came to pass at the end of three days after they had made a [6] league with them, that they heard that they *were* their neighbours, and *that* they dwelt among them. 17. And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities *were* Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim. 18. And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured

14. The men took of their victuals—*i.e.* they brake bread with them, and so entered into covenant and made peace, according to the usage of Eastern nations, instead of asking counsel of God. How far was Joshua wrong? The question was not an easy one, for Joshua did not know who they were, nor where they came from; but it must be remembered that he at once accepted their story without seeking Divine guidance. He was no doubt flattered by the first embassy that had presented itself to him, and carried away by a spirit of compassion. It is likely also that he hoped to have an added strength by an alliance with a foreign people. This was the snare by which Israel was again and again entangled; the temptation to rely upon human help instead of the arm of the Lord being wellnigh irresistible.

At the mouth of the Lord—*i.e.* by Urim and Thummim (see Exod. xxviii. 30; Num. xxvii. 21).

17. Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim. Chephirah was eight or nine miles west of Gibeon, Beeroth about three miles north, and Kirjath-jearim about nine miles south-west.

18. The children of Israel smote them not. Is a covenant based on fraud binding? Israel held that it was, and we know that divine judgment swept down on the kingdom of Israel in later days because Saul ignored it by massacring certain of the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 1, 2). In this case the responsibility lay upon Israel, for the fraud would have been detected had they sought God's advice. And it has been pointed out that as the destruction of the Canaanites was chiefly with a view to the protection of the life of Israel from idolatry, this end was reached by their punishment; for the position in which they were placed practically killed any influence they might have, and brought them within the sphere of the knowledge of God.

against the princes. 19. But all the princes said unto all the congregation, We have sworn unto them by the LORD
9 the God. [9] God of Israel: now therefore we may not touch them. 20. This we will do to them; we will even let them live, lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them. 21. And the princes said unto them, Let
10 so they became. them live; [10] but let them be [d] hewers of wood and drawers
d Deut. xxix. 11. of water unto all the congregation; as the princes had
e ver. 15. [e] promised them. 22. And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them, saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We *are* very far from you; when ye dwell among us? 23. Now therefore ye *are* cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God. 24. And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was cer-
f Deut. vii. 1. tainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy God [f] commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you,
11 for. therefore we were sore afraid [11] of our lives because of you, and have done this thing. 25. And now, behold, we *are* in thine hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do. 26. And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. 27. And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, *even* unto this day, in the place which he should choose.

23. **Ye are cursed.** The curse in this case, as in many others, proved a blessing. Their work for the Tabernacle, humiliating and degrading as it was to a free people, brought its own reward in the knowledge of the true God.

24. **We were sore afraid.** Why was Rahab adopted into God's kingdom as a free citizen, and the Gibeonites made to serve as bondmen? Rahab had done Israel a signal service, the Gibeonites had deceived them. Rahab's fear had led to faith, and her faith to works, but the terror of the Gibeonites was throughout a slavish dread, and never became anything better. Rahab, by her action, separated herself from her wicked countrymen, but the Gibeonites with one hand made covenant with the Canaanites, and with the other with Israel. Their double policy, the result of slavish fear, led necessarily to bondage.

LESSON X

A Foolish Friendship

INTRODUCTION.—Nothing more important than school friendship. In this lesson we have a good opportunity of showing the dangers of foolish friendship and how they may be avoided. Begin by referring to the last lesson, and then show how a great success often leads to pride. Israel forgot the part that prayer played in the last stratagem, and began to think it was their own. So thinking, they were outwitted by the stratagem of their duller enemies.

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. The would-be friend. Israel full of their last victory. How cleverly it had been won! How easily the stupid men of Ai fell into the trap! So they thought, little knowing of the trap prepared for them. Gibeon, though a royal city, in great danger. Resolves to make a powerful friend. Knows that Israel hates all Canaanites. Will pretend to be another people. So their manner, dress, provisions, words.	1. Picture the boy who has made a great success in lessons or games in danger of being taken in if flattered. Picture the weak boy who seeks his friendship by pretending that he has got wealthy parents, beautiful home, plenty of money.
2. Israel taken in. Israel hears the tempting offer. Flattered by the way in which it is made. Thinks it will be so good to have a strong ally in the north, especially one that speaks of their God in such a religious way. Enters into covenant. Eats their food. Makes oaths of undying friendship. But forgets what Moses had said (Deut. vii. 2), and the need of prayer.	2. Give the four causes of their great mistake: (1) Pride; (2) flattery; (3) worldliness; (4) neglect of prayer; and show how the same operate to-day, how boys are taken in by being praised, by the hope of some worldly advantage, and by neglecting to ask counsel of God.
3. Consequences. In three days Israel undeceived (see ver. 16). How vexed they are to think they, who had been so clever a short time ago, had been outwitted by the heavy Canaanite. Picture the strife that now springs up between princes and people, how the one accuse the other, how at first Israel refuses to be bound by its oath, and talks of slaying the	3. Show that these three results are sure to follow foolish friendship: (1) Disappointment when we see that he is not what he said he was; (2) quarrel with those who introduced him; (3) risk to our reputation and fair name.

LESSON X—*continued.* A FOOLISH FRIENDSHIP

MATTER.

Gibeonites (ver. 26). Then they realise the new danger in which they stand. Not only to defend themselves, but these new friends, and these are friends whom their king bade them destroy.

4. **Overruled for good.**

Joshua doubtless took the difficulty to God, and He in His mercy overrules all for their good. Israel gains through being relieved from burdensome, humiliating duties. Gibeon gains by obtaining a powerful friend and a position in which they may know God. Joshua gains by the union of his enemies which follows on this, for it gives him the opportunity of meeting them altogether in the open instead of separately behind their walled cities.

METHOD.

4. Show that when we have made a mistake, the best thing is to take it at once to God. It may be that the unworthy friend may bring us help, and that we may help him. But note that God's overruling providence must never be taken as an approval of our folly. We must never say that it is just as well that we made the mistake. A sin is never fortunate.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

A Foolish Friendship.

'The friendship of the world is enmity with God.'—S. James iv. 4.

1. *The would-be friend.*
   Gibeon—in danger—will make friends with Israel—pretend to be what they are not—dress—provisions—words—deceitful.
2. *Israel taken in.*
   Why? (1) Pride. (2) Flattery. (3) Worldliness. (4) Neglect of prayer. How? The binding covenant.
3. *Consequences.*
   (1) Self-mortification. (2) Disgrace and contention. (3) Danger.
4. *Overruled for good.*
   (1) Advantage to Israel—relief from burden. (2) Advantage to Gibeon—knowledge of God. (3) Advantage to Joshua—conquest of the South.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO LESSON X

The following quotations from Kitto give point to the narrative :—

The equipment of the Gibeonites: They took old sacks upon their asses. These sacks were the same as the large bags, usually of hair, in which the Orientals pack up, for convenient transport on the backs of animals, all the baggage and commodities required for the journey, excepting only water-bags and large kettles. Beds, boxes, provisions, pots, packages of goods, all are carried in such bags, slung over the back of the animal, one hanging at each side. Being a good deal knocked about and exposed to the weather, these saddle-bags, as one might call them but for their size, suffer in a long journey, and hence the Gibeonites took old bags to convey the impression that a long journey had been made.

The wine-bottles are said to have been '*old, and rent, and bound up.*' These leathern bottles are made of the skins of goats, oxen, and buffaloes turned inside out, clipped with the scissors, washed and rubbed over with warm mineral tar or naphtha. The openings are closed with a sort of wooden bung, except at the feet, where they are only tied up with a cord. The wine is drawn at one of the feet merely by opening or closing the noose.

The 'shoes were old and clouted.' For 'shoes' read 'sandals.' In Syria they were probably of hide. They were seldom mended, being of so little value that they could easily be renewed when the worse for wear. We have seen a man make himself a new pair out of a piece of skin in a few minutes, for sandals are not wholly disused in the East. The mere fact that articles so easily renewed were patched (clouted = patched, see Jer. xxxviii. 11, 12) in this instance was well calculated to suggest the idea of a long journey, in which the convenience of purchasing new ones, or materials for making them, had not been found, for which reason they had been obliged to make their old ones serve by patching. It was a singular thing to see sandals clouted at all, and only a journey could explain the fact.

Their bread had become 'dry and mouldy.' The Hebrew word translated '*mouldy*' is the same which is rendered by cracknels in 1 Kings xiv. 3. This word denotes a kind of crisp cake. The original term would seem from its etymology to denote something spotted or sprinkled over, and it is supposed from the old Jewish explanations to denote a kind of biscuit, or a small and hard-baked cake calculated to keep (for a journey or other purpose) by reason of its excessive hardness and freedom from moisture, or perhaps by being twice baked, as the word *bis-cuit* expresses. . . . The ordinary bread, baked in thin cakes, like pancakes, is not made to keep more than a day or two, a fresh supply being baked daily. If kept longer it dries up and becomes at last excessively hard, harder than any biscuit that we ever knew. It was this kind of bread that the Gibeonites produced, and they indicated its hardness (not its mouldiness)—'*hard as biscuits*'—in evidence of the length of the journey they had taken.

CHAPTER X. 1-15

NOW it came to pass, when Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; [a] as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to [b] Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them; 2. That they feared greatly, because Gibeon *was* a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it *was* greater than Ai, and all the men thereof *were* mighty. 3. Wherefore Adoni-zedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying, 4. Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel. 5. Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped [1] before Gibeon, and made war against it. 6. And the men

[a] chap. vi. 20.
[b] chap. viii. 3.
[1] against.

1. **Adoni-zedek**—Lord of Righteousness. Note that the only other king of Jerusalem of whom we hear before this time bore a similar name, Melchizedek, so some have thought that the name was an official title of the Jebusite kings. It is interesting in any case to note that thus early the famous city was associated with the word '*Righteousness*.'

How the inhabitants of Gibeon. This departure from the league of one of the most important cities was regarded as an act of treachery, and the five kings of the Amorites determined to punish Gibeon. As indicating the fear that this act of defection filled them with, it should be noted that Hebron, Lachish, and Eglon are all in the south, and the forces from these places would have to march from thirty to fifty miles to attack Gibeon. Apparently the king of Jerusalem can find no nearer allies, and yet does not venture to attack Gibeon by himself.

6. **Slack not thy hand.** The attack was unexpected, and Gibeon feared that all would be over unless Joshua made haste. It is, of course, plain that only a certain number, not *all* the Gibeonites, were employed in the Temple service.

of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the [2]mountains are gathered together against us. 7. So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty *men* of valour. 8. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee. 9. Joshua therefore came [3]unto them suddenly, [4]*and* went up from Gilgal all night. 10. And the LORD discomfited them

[2] hill country.
[3] upon.
[4] for he.

8. **And the Lord said.** At the critical moment when Joshua might have been depressed with the greatness of the host which had gathered against Gibeon, God encouraged him with assurance of victory. This encouragement led Joshua to make a sudden attack which was successful from the beginning.

10. **And the Lord discomfited . . . and slew . . . and chased.** Joshua and his army are simply the instruments in God's hands; it is He Who does all.

Up to Beth-horon. Apparently there are two Beth-horons at this day, known as 'The Upper' and 'The Lower.' Upper Beth-horon was six or seven miles west of Gibeon up a rocky hill, and Lower Beth-horon lay on the other side at the foot of the steep pass. It was whilst the Amorites were escaping along this very rough and rocky road that the hailstorm burst upon them and crushed them. It is interesting to note that this pass—according to tradition—proved fatal to many of Israel's foes, to the host of Sennacherib, also to the Syrians who were caught here by Judas Maccabæus, and again to the Roman army under Cestius Gallus.

Any question as to the probability of hailstones having such an effect as is here ascribed to them may be set aside by remembering that storms in the East in the latitude of Palestine are often more severe than any we have knowledge of. In Constantinople a hailstorm is recorded to have happened in 1831, when hailstones weighing from half a pound to a pound crushed in the roofs of houses, and killed both men and animals. For similar occurrences, see Exod. ix. 24 and 1 Sam. vii. 10.

Azekah has not been identified, but was situated somewhere in the rich agricultural plain over which the Amorites were pressing to their fortified cities.

Makkedah. If Makkedah were close to Ekron, and Azekah close to Libnah, it would seem that the enemy, owing to the hot pursuit of the Israelites, separated, the five kings and their followers fleeing almost due east, and the others taking a southward direction directly they reached the level country of the plain.

before Israel, and slew them *with* a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them [5]*along* the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. 11. And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, [6]*and* were in the going down [7]to Beth-horon, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died; *they were* [8]moe which died with hailstones than *they* whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

[5] by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon.
[6] while they.
[7] of.
[8] more.

12. Then spake Joshua to the LORD in the day when the

12. **Then spake Joshua.** *Then—i.e.* at the time when the thick darkness of the terrific hailstorm obscured the pass of Beth-horon, and made the pursuit both difficult and dangerous—Joshua, looking over towards Gibeon, where the sun was shining in noonday splendour (see ver. 13), prays that it may neither be obscured nor set. Looking over towards the sea beyond the storm-clouds that enveloped Beth-horon, he saw the moon hanging, as it were, over Ajalon, and he prayed that he might have the benefit of its light also till Israel was avenged. And at his prayer the storm, which had come up from the west, turned south, sweeping down over Azekah (see ver. 10), the sun continued to shine with all its brilliancy, and the light of day, by God's Providence, was protracted far on into the night. From this verse we should suppose that there had been a halt of the host, for Joshua spake the prayer 'in the sight of Israel.' This halt may well have been occasioned by the tremendous storm which seemed to come as a barrier between Israel and her foe. It is this that gives point to Joshua's words, for otherwise we are at a loss to understand why, when the sun was 'in the midst of heaven,' and he had many hours of light left, he should have been so anxious lest the pursuit should have been cut short. But if he and the host, knowing nothing of what God was doing in the storm, began to feel that the on-coming darkness was likely to enable the Amorites to escape, he would naturally appeal to Him, Who had thus far given him the victory, to make it complete. And the answer came, not only by the disappearance of the storm after it had done its work, but by the lengthening of the daylight, how we know not. We must remember that whilst the words 'the sun stood still, and the moon stayed,' express a truth which must not be explained away, we are reminded by verse 13 that they are poetical words taken from a collection of national poems called the Book of Jasher; they are similar to such expressions as 'the stars in their courses fought against Sisera' (Judges v. 20). 'He maketh Lebanon and Sirion to skip like a young wild ox' (Ps. xxix. 6). The great truth enshrined in them is that which is found in a less startling form in S. James v. 17, 18, that God does order even the natural world in answer to man's prayers, and that therefore we have Scriptural authority for our prayers for rain and fine weather.

12. **Gibeon . . . Ajalon.** These places mentioned as marking the spots over which it seemed that the sun and moon were hanging. The valley of Ajalon, *i.e.* of the Gazelle, is a 'broad and beautiful valley,' running south-west from Lower Beth-horon.

LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel,

[c] Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon ;
And thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

[c] Isa. xxviii. 21 ; Ecclus. xlvi. 4.

13. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed,
Until the [9] people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.

[9] nation.

Is not this written in the book of Jasher ?
[10] So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven,
And hasted not to go down about a whole day.

[10] And the sun stayed in.

14. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man ; for the LORD fought for Israel. 15. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

13. **Book of Jasher.** Apparently an anthology or collection of national poems, containing, we know, the Song of the Bow, David's elegy over Saul and Jonathan, as well as this. As to how much is here quoted is not known. Some think from verses 12 to 15, as verse 15 very plainly interrupts the course of the narrative. If this were so, the quotation is partly prose.

LESSON XI

Promises, Human and Divine

INTRODUCTION.—Begin by asking what was the subject of the last lesson, what was the mistake Israel had made, and what were its consequences, and then go straight to the question as to whether we are bound to keep foolish promises. Quote Ps. xv. 4, where we find that one of the marks of a good man is that he does not disappoint the neighbour to whom he has promised, even though keeping his word may be to his own hindrance. Was Jephthah right, then, in keeping his promise to God? Or Herod in keeping his promise to the daughter of Herodias? We see this is a different matter, as the life of another was concerned, as well as his own happiness. But where our own comfort or wellbeing alone is concerned, we are bound to fulfil our promise.

MATTER.

1. The Temptation.

Israel has hardly got over its disgust at being outwitted by the Canaanites when news is brought to Joshua that their new ally is in the greatest danger. Draw this out, the number of the kings, the

METHOD.

1. Give examples from school life of similar temptations. Ask what was at stake. Honour. True honour always keeps its promises. Quote—

'Honour and shame from no condition rise,
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.'

LESSON XI—*continued.* PROMISES, HUMAN AND DIVINE

MATTER.

forces they would probably have at their disposal, the rage that animated the enemy at finding a strong friend had proved traitor. What could Israel do? Hitherto they had only faced one king and one city, what could they do against five? Why were they bound to imperil their existence for a neighbour who had obtained their friendship under false pretences. The world would have said, 'Leave her alone, her falsehood richly deserves the judgment it brings upon her.'

2. **How resisted.**

Joshua does not hesitate a moment. '*So Joshua went up*,' etc. It seems as though God left him to himself to determine his own action, and only when he had made up his mind to deliver Gibeon did the promise come, 'Fear them not,' etc. Note the speed with which Joshua acted. No delay, not for a moment, but a forced march up the steep hills all through the night, till he came upon the enemy all unawares, lying encamped before Gibeon.

3. **The Result.**

Note when man sets out to fulfil his obligation, the Divine help is assured. God now takes the matter into His own hands (see verse 14). Note the three stages of the battle: (1) The conflict before Gibeon, when the enemy are defeated; (2) the escape of a large part of the foe up the Beth-horon pass, and the destruction of many by the hailstorm as they fled down the steep on the other side; (3) the last attack by the pursuers at Makkedah and as far as Azekah. At Azekah, apparently, the storm ceased, but those who were left had no spirit to stand against Israel, and those who could escaped to their fenced cities. The first part of the battle took place very early in the morning—about dawn, we may suppose, and lasted till ten or eleven; then the pursuit

METHOD.

Quote Tennyson—

'Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.'

Here compare our Lord's temptation in the Garden to give up unworthy friends, and contrast with it S. Peter's temptation to give up the Good Friend.

2. It is the sense of honour that leads a boy to put aside all doubt as to whether he should risk his life or not for his word. Quote the brave man's words to one whom he loved—

'I could not love thee, dear, so much
Loved I not honour more.'

Compare Christ's zeal to fulfil His promise to save the world, shown again and again, and especially in the last going up to Jerusalem. Contrast S. Peter 'warming himself' by the fire, and so proving unfaithful. To dally with a question of honour is to be lost.

3. Note the delight God has in those who do their best to redeem their promises, not only helping them, but giving an abundant reward. Show that this battle was the critical one of the campaign, and success here would mean the practical submission of the whole country. So Joshua found that, in helping an unfortunate ally, he gained the greatest victory of his life. In conclusion, show that the principle of fidelity to promises holds good in little as well as big things, and that a boy who is known to stick to his word is not only regarded as honourable, but blessed by God in all that he attempts. Show also that God's fidelity to His own word is made much of in Holy Scripture. See the Benedictus and Magnificat, and Heb. vi. 13, 14, and our Lord's own words, 'Heaven

LESSON XI—*continued.* PROMISES, HUMAN AND DIVINE

MATTER.	METHOD.
began, and about noon the thick darkness over Beth-horon made Joshua fear that the sun would be enveloped, and pursuit become impossible. Hence the appeal and the Divine answer in the clearing away of the storm. That God does order the weather according to His own plans follows from our belief in His Omnipotence; that these plans are modified by man's prayers is the plain teaching of Scripture. See 1 Kings xvii. 1, xviii. 42, 45, and James v. 17, 18, and the natural inference from our Lord's words (S. Mark xi. 20-24).	and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away.' And He would have us be what He is Himself. 'Ye therefore shall be perfect as My Father which is in heaven is perfect' (S. Matt. v. 48).

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Promises, Human and Divine.

1. *The Temptation.* To desert an unworthy friend.
   Why? Because my life is in danger.
   Why not? Because my word is my bond.
   Contrast S. Peter's temptation to desert the Good Friend.
   Compare Christ's temptation to desert the false friends.

2. *How resisted.* By immediate action.
   To question would be sin.
   Contrast Joshua's activity and S. Peter's 'warming himself' by the fire.
   Compare Christ's zeal to keep His promise, 'I have a baptism . . . how am I straitened till it be accomplished.'

3. *Results.* Victory at Beth-horon.
   Conquest of the South.
   Victory at Calvary.
   Conquest of the world.

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO LESSON XI

Importance of the battle of Beth-horon. Dean Stanley, in *The Jewish Church*, vol. i. lecture xi. p. 204, writes: 'The battle of Beth-horon or Gibeon is one of the most important in the history of the world. . . . It is one of the few military engagements which belong equally to ecclesiastical and civil history—which have decided equally the fortunes of the world and of the Church. The roll will be complete if to this we add two or three more which we shall encounter in the Jewish history; and in later times, the battle of the Milvian bridge, which involved the fall of Paganism; the battle of Poitiers, which sealed the fall of Arianism; the battle of Bedr, which secured the rise of Mahometanism in Asia; the battle of Tours, which checked the spread of Mahometanism in West Europe; the battle of Lepanto, which checked it in East Europe; the battle of Lützen, which determined the balance of power between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism in Germany. . . . It is the only incident of this period expressly noticed in the later books of the Old Testament. "The Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim; He shall be wroth as in the valley *of Gibeon.*" The very day of the week was fixed in later traditions. With the Samaritans it was Thursday; with the Mussulmans it was Friday; and this has been given as a reason for that day being chosen as the sacred day of Islam. Immediately upon its close follows the rapid succession of victory and extermination which swept the whole of Southern Palestine into the hands of Israel.'

The Miracle. Kitto, in his *Bible Illustrations*, rightly notes that Joshua in his request, 'Sun, stand thou still,' speaks in the language of his time. There is no reason to suppose that 'he had any better knowledge of the system of the universe than was generally possessed at the time. But if he had been a very Newton, he would have been mad to express himself in any other language than this. If he had expressed himself with philosophical precision, his language would have perplexed the understandings of men far more for three thousand years than they have done in the three hundred years since the truth of the world's system has been known.' With regard to the miracle, he sets aside the supposition that the motion of the earth upon its axis was for the time arrested. 'This, no doubt, would effect the result intended. But it would—without an additional and equally stupendous exertion of almighty power—have produced other and very tremendous effects upon the whole earth. The natural consequence of such a check to the earth's motion would have been by means of the atmosphere, to crush at once all animal and vegetable existence—to level with the ground the loftiest and most massive structures, and, in fact, to sweep the whole surface of the globe as with the besom of destruction. God might have prevented this. But . . . it answers all the conditions of the question . . . to suppose that the light of the then setting sun was supernaturally prolonged, through the operation of the same laws of refraction and reflection, by which the sun's disc is ordinarily seen above the horizon some time after he has really sunk below it. He Who created the heavenly luminaries and established the laws which transmit their light could at this time have so altered the medium through which the sun's rays passed as to

ADDITIONAL NOTES TO LESSON XI—*continued*

render it visible above the horizon long after it must under ordinary circumstances have disappeared.' This to the apprehension of the Israelites would have all the effect of staying the career of the sun. Harper (*The Bible and Modern Discoveries*, p. 160) has this interesting note on the possible cause of the refraction: 'A wave of intense cold in that hot country produced this terrible hailstorm. Such occurrences are not uncommon even now in Syria. It is always at a time of *intense* cold that refraction of the sun occurs. Travellers in the Polar regions give many instances when the sun is seen for *several days*, when they know the orb is one degree *below* the horizon.'

CHAPTER X. 16-27

[1] And.

[1] BUT these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah. 17. And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah. 18. And Joshua said, Roll great stones

unto.

[2] upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to

[3] But.

keep them: 19. [3] And stay you not, *but* pursue after your enemies, and smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the LORD your God hath delivered them into your hand. 20. And it came to pass, when Joshua and the children of Israel had made an end of slaying them *with* a very great slaughter, till they were consumed, [4] that the rest *which* remained of them entered into fenced cities. 21. [5] And all the people returned to the

[4] and the remnant which remained of them had entered.

[5] That.

16. **These five kings fled.** It would seem that the five kings when they saw that defeat was certain separated themselves from the main body of their followers, and made for Makkedah, where they knew there was a good hiding-place. But this was discovered by their pursuers, who told Joshua of the fact, and he bade them stop up the entrance with great stones. It has been noticed that the word '*cave*' has the definite article before it both in the Hebrew and the LXX., which suggests the idea that the cave was well known. Palestine seems to abound in large caves —*e.g.* the cave at Rimmon (Judg. xx. 47), which could contain six hundred men; the cave of Adullam, where David, his brethren, and his followers lay hid; the cave of Engedi, large enough to contain David and his men and Saul and his men, and that without the former being known to the latter; and this particular district, as is evident from the name Beth-horon, *i.e.* 'house of caves,' was specially celebrated for its caverns.

20. **Fenced Cities,** *i.e.* fortified towns. 'The fortifications generally consisted of walls crowned with battlemented parapets having towers at regular intervals (2 Chron. xxxii. 5; Jer. xxxi. 38), on which in later times engines of war were placed, and in time of war watch was kept night and day (Judg. ix. 46, 47; 2 Kings ix. 17; 2 Chron. xxvi. 9-15).'—Maclear.

21. **None moved his tongue.** The submission was complete. Bereft of their leaders, with more than half their numbers destroyed, conscious too that Israel had supernatural aid, the Amorites were awed into silence, and the bulk of Joshua's army that had pursued as far as Azekah returned in peace to their captain, who, with a few chosen men, had remained at Makkedah.

camp to Joshua *at* Makkedah in peace: none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel. 22. Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave. 23. And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon. 24. And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. 25. And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight. 26. And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. 27. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, *that* Joshua commanded, and they [a] took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had [6] been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, *which remain* until this very day.

[a] Deut. xxi. 23; chap. viii. 29.
[6] hid themselves.

24. **Put your feet upon the necks**, *i.e.* Realise for yourselves the impotency of those who fight against the Lord. Standing on a fallen foe is a symbol of complete subjection. So Ps. cx., where the Lord is pictured bidding David's Lord sit on His right hand till His enemies become His footstool. See also 1 Cor. xv. 25, for the same metaphor.

25. **Thus shall the Lord do.** Note the language. It is not 'Thus shall *ye* do,' but thus shall the *Lord* do. The victory over their enemies was not to be won by their own strength or cunning, but by the arm of the Lord.

26. **And hanged them.** Joshua exposed the bodies of these kings as he had the body of the king of Ai, in order that the whole host might see for themselves the greatness of the victory that God had wrought for them. But there was no revenge in so doing. At eventide, according to the merciful enactment of the law (Deut. xxi. 23), their bodies were taken down and cast into the very cave where they had hoped to find safety.

LESSON XII

Judgment

INTRODUCTION.—Begin by referring to the last lesson, and ask what happened to the enemy after the battle of Beth-horon. Were all destroyed? Did any escape? Were all those who escaped happy and thankful? Who were not? Why? What are they doing? Waiting for judgment. This, too, will be our state one day. Either in prison (1 Peter iii. 19) or in Paradise (S. Luke xxiii. 43). To-day, then, think of Judgment.

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. Waiting for Judgment. The scene after the defeat. The five kings, when they see all is over, fear to stand by their men, but, like cowards, look to their own safety. They keep together, make for a well-known hiding-place—the great cave of Makkedah. Then when all is safe will go home. The cave reached in safety, but the retreat discovered. Huge stones built up against its mouth. How dreadful their feelings! Judgment must follow quickly, and they will be put to death. All their wicked acts, cruelties, abominations, fill their minds.	1. Picture the scene clearly, and then show that that prison reminds us of another prison where Christ went (1 Peter iii. 19), where souls will await judgment. No escape, and nothing to think of but two things—our lives and the Judge. Illustrate by the well-known fact that at death, if the mind is not wasted by disease, the memory is very active, and the forgotten sins of the past, even little things—in one case a man's cruelty to a cat when a boy—come back with great distinctness.
2. The Judgment. At last Joshua's word is heard, 'Open the mouth of the cave.' Judgment has come. They grovel on the ground before the Judge. Power, royalty, pride, all gone. These the mighty enemies that Israel so dreaded! As they lie there, Joshua calls for his captains and bids them put their feet on their necks as a sign of the utter weakness of those who fight against God. Note there is no one to say anything for them; they die unpitied and unregretted, ruined by their own selfishness.	2. Show by the story that judgment has two aspects—one for the righteous, and one for the wicked. For the righteous, triumph, power, victory; and for the wicked, shame, condemnation, and death. Quote S. John v. 29; Rom. ii. 7-9. Triumph, even in this world, comes at last to a righteous cause, though it may have only one or two to uphold it. Quote Rev. xx. 12, and explain that 'the opened books' mean the revelation of our own characters. We shall not only at Judgment see Him as He is, but ourselves as we are.

LESSON XII—*continued.* JUDGMENT

MATTER.

3. The Memorial of the Judgment.

What does Joshua do with the bodies of the dead? Why? Where are they afterwards buried? Joshua puts them into the cave, that Israel may better realise the character of the judgment. 'The things that should have been for their wealth have been unto them an occasion of falling' (Ps. lxix. 23). And they were never disturbed. They had no friends, like Saul had in the men of Jabesh-gilead (1 Sam. xxxi. 11, 12), to come and rescue their bodies and give them proper burial.

4. Lesson.

S. Luke xxi. 36, 'Watch ye therefore, and pray.' Watching implies vigilance over ourselves and our duties to others. Praying implies seeking the help such vigilance shows we are in need of. And both these necessary that we may stand —not be in shame, like the five kings—before our Joshua, the Son of man (Ps. i. 5, 6).

METHOD.

3. Illustrate by monuments in churches, in cities, etc., that the lives of the good are commemorated, but the worthless and bad have no memorials. Their memorial is perished with them (Ps. ix. 6). So history goes on, ever recording the virtues of the good, ever judging the vices of the wicked, and so anticipates the last Great Judgment.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Judgment.

'I believe He shall come to judge.'

1. *Waiting for Judgment.*
   The five kings—in the cave—securely guarded—awaiting Joshua's Judgment.
   The spirits—in prison (1 Peter iii. 19)—awaiting Christ's Judgment.
   'We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.'

2. *The Judgment.*
   For the righteous—triumph—rewards—life.
   For the wicked — shame — condemnation—death.
   'The wicked shall not be able to stand in the judgment.'

3. *The Memorial of the Judgment.*
   For the righteous—beautiful memorials—praise of posterity.
   For the wicked—nameless graves—reproach of posterity.
   'Their memorial is perished with them.'

4. *Lesson.*
   'Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.'

CHAPTER X. 28-43

AND that day Joshua took Makkedah, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, them, and all the souls that *were* therein; he let none remain: and he did to the king of Makkedah [a] as he did unto the king of Jericho. 29. Then Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, *unto* Libnah, and fought against Libnah: 30. And the LORD delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel; and he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein; he let none remain in it; but did unto the king thereof as he did unto the king of Jericho. 31. And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it: 32. And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, which took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

[a] chap. vi. 21.

28. **And that day.** Joshua determines to reap at once the fruits of his great victory. He begins a vigorous campaign, which results in the conquest of some of the more important positions in the South, and of its practical subjugation. Makkedah, near which they are encamped, is naturally the first to fall.

29. **Libnah.** As the name means 'whiteness,' it is supposed that there was some natural feature which made it conspicuous. This was probably the limestone with which the site is said to abound.

31. **Lachish.** If Captain Conder's identification of Lachish with Tell-el-Hesy is correct, and Dr. George Adam Smith (*Historical Geography*, p. 234) writes that this is *proved* by English survey and excavations, we must picture to ourselves 'a truncated cone rising some two hundred feet, with a fine plain on the top. A finer position for a fortress or fortified city could hardly be imagined.' It is interesting to note that the after-history of Lachish agrees with what we here read of it. Being by nature a strong place, it was able, in after days, to make a stout defence even against the king of Assyria (see 2 Kings xix. 8). So here, too, Joshua was unable to do with it what he did with all the other places—take it by assault on the first day. It was only on *the second day* that it fell into his hands. This is one of those little points which indirectly show the accuracy of the Bible, as Blunt has drawn out in his *Undesigned Coincidences*. See Additional Note.

33. Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua smote him and his people, until *he* had left him none remaining. 34. And from Lachish Joshua passed unto Eglon, and all Israel with him; and they encamped against it, and fought against it: 35. And they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish. 36. And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto Hebron; and they fought against it: 37. And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that

33. **Gezer.** It is strange to find this place mentioned next, as, if the identification of explorers is correct, it lies twenty-five miles north of Lachish. It does not appear, however, that Joshua smote the city itself; but when the king of Gezer marched to the assistance of his friends in Lachish, who were needing help, as they had lost both their king and best soldiers, Joshua not only beat him, but cut off his retreat northward, and exterminated the whole host.

34. **Eglon.** This lies three miles north of Lachish, in the plain or lowlands of Judah, on the direct road from Jerusalem to Gaza. It is described by travellers as a low, round, white hillock, covered with scattered heaps of unhewn stones. Having lost its king and many of its best soldiers, it was easily taken.

36. **Joshua went up from Eglon . . . unto Hebron.** An accurate description, as Hebron was in the highlands of Judæa some three thousand feet higher than Eglon. Joshua had taken two of the confederate cities; he now marches to take a third, which had also lost its king and army. Apparently having heard of the defeat of their chief, the people of Hebron had chosen another who endeavoured to save his throne and city. Joshua had an additional motive to that of justice urging him to Hebron—viz., the sacred interest that attached to the place. The great patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were all buried there; so, too, Sarah, the mother of the race. Joshua, after its capture, doubtless went to the cave of Machpelah, the resting-place of the dead, and with his chiefs held there a service of thanksgiving, similar to that held at Khartoum after the capture of Omdurman. It should be noted that soon after Joshua left it, it was occupied by three powerful chiefs, sons of Anak, who disputed with Caleb for its possession. Ancient Hebron lay on a hill to the north-west of the present site; it commands an entrance to the higher plateau, and it is within hail of the desert, which means trade with the Arabs. The valleys about it are very fruitful. Like so many ancient towns, Hebron must have combined the attractions of a market and 'shrine.' This explains why it was so quickly reoccupied after Joshua left it. See Additional Note.

were therein ; he left none remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon ; but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that were therein. 38. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir ; and fought against it : 39. And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof ; and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that *were* therein ; he left none remaining : as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof ; as he had done also to Libnah, and to her king.

40. So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their

38. **Debir.** Joshua now turned south-west and attacked Debir, a city about twelve miles from Hebron. Debir had not been concerned in the last attack ; but from the fact that, like Hebron, it had cities dependent on it ; from the fact also that its names—Kirjath-sanna, 'city of law,' and Kirjath-sepher, 'city of books'—suggest that 'it was a seat of learning and a house of Canaanitish culture,' it was evidently important. Its position, 'commanding the roads from Egypt and the desert, from Gaza and Beersheba, made it a centre of vast consequence in the defence of the country.' Sayce, on the ground that Othniel took it (Josh. xv. 16, 17), considers that it was never taken by Joshua ; but inasmuch as it was not occupied, it is not at all unlikely that when Joshua left, it was again taken possession of by the Canaanites. There is nothing to show that these cities were razed to the ground. Othniel's capture took place about ten years later.

40. **Joshua smote all the country of the hills.** This verse must be taken in a general sense. It seems clear from the after-history of the South, that whilst it was crippled and generally subjugated, there was much to be done before Judah obtained possession of it. The 'hill country,' *i.e.* the mountainous region south of Jerusalem ; the south, *i.e.* the wilderness of Judæa ; the vale, *i.e.* the sandy but productive plain running along the coast from Carmel to Gaza : and the springs (A.V.) or slopes (R.V.), *i.e.* the Shephelah or rolling country between the plain and the mountains, were all conquered in the sense that nothing was to be feared from the cities remaining there, but they were not occupied nor depopulated. It seems strange at first that Joshua did not do what any general would have done, that is, leave bodies of men in the chief cities and towns to have controlled the country. But we must remember that the land was not yet divided ; and had Ephraimites, or Danites, or Naphtalites been put in possession, they would have made a claim to that which they had kept, which it would have been difficult for Joshua to resist. It must also be borne in mind that had not the Hebrew occupation been a slow and gradual process, the Israelites would have never become a nation. There was much need of discipline,

kings: he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD God of Israel commanded. 41. And Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon.

42. And all these kings and their land did Joshua take at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel. 43. And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

and also the presence of a common foe, before the tribes could be welded together into one people.

It is strange that both Jarmuth and Jerusalem, the two remaining confederate cities undestroyed, should have been left by Joshua in the possession of the enemy.

41. **From Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza.** A general description of the country that was now subdued. From the edge of the great desert on the East to the Mediterranean sea on the west, and from Goshen, a city in the southern part of the territory of Judah, to Gibeon in the north, the name of Israel was feared, and none ventured to dispute their supremacy.

LESSON XIII

Perseverance

INTRODUCTION.—First show by a map what was the result of the battle of Beth-horon. What five cities would lie at the mercy of Joshua? Which does he attack? Which does he leave alone? Why? What other cities does he smite? Which was the most important? Which the most interesting? Show how much of the country was subdued before he returned home. Why was it not occupied? Now what feature in Joshua's character comes out strongly in this campaign? What do we call a boy who refuses to rest when he has gained a great success—persevering? We shall make this, then, a lesson on *Perseverance*. Make the children learn the proverb, '*The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting*' (Prov. xii. 27). What had Joshua taken? Virtually the whole South by the capture and execution of the five kings. But it had to be conquered.

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. Joshua's plan. Joshua's soldiers, very tired after their long pursuit, would like to go back to their wives and children at Gilgal. Why go any further south	1. Illustrate by the boy who, having gained one prize, sets about mapping out his work and time for getting the next. He will make the most of (roast) that which 'he has

LESSON XIII—*continued.* PERSEVERANCE

MATTER.	METHOD.
when they were not allowed to occupy the places they took? Joshua determined to take every advantage of his victory. Intends now to master the whole South. Lachish, the fortress of the South, must be taken; so, too, Hebron and Debir, which commanded the great southern roads. Libnah and Eglon had been concerned in the confederacy, and must be punished. In this way the whole South will be subdued.	taken in hunting.' So with character: one sin conquered, or one virtue won, the persevering child goes on to gain further victories.
2. How far it was carried out. For some reason, perhaps because it was too strong for a tired army to carry, Jerusalem is not taken. Many of the cities of the Philistines are also left alone. Joshua, like every leader, is limited by his material. He cannot do all that he would, though he gained a general success. The South gave him no more trouble in his lifetime. But there was very much to be done before the tribes could have peaceful possession of what God gave them.	2. Show that even when we cannot carry out all our plans, we may gain enough for present use. A boy may find by experience that he has more to do than he expected, more than he can hope to finish; but if he is persevering, he does the chief things in his lesson or work. Quote the proverb, 'The best is often the worst enemy to the good,' and explain what it means. Perseverance is shown by a refusal to be daunted by what appears to be a hopeless task. It does what it can. If it cannot do all, it does half, and so learns in time to do all.
3. Advantages and disadvantages. The complete conquest of the South was probably impossible. Had Joshua determined to sacrifice all for it, he would have done it. But the withdrawal of so large a force from Gilgal for a long time was dangerous. It is possible that he had heard of Hazor's north confederacy whilst in the South. And note further, that had the Philistines and Amorites been destroyed, the tribes that afterwards inhabited the South would have had nothing to train them into hardness and discipline. It was necessary for their proper growth and development that they should have difficulties in settling into their new home; that they should be obliged to look to God for help.	3. We cannot always have complete success, but we can always have what Joshua had—the satisfaction of having done the best we could. Note the difficulties in our work, the defects in our character are stepping-stones to better things, and without them we should make but little progress.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Perseverance.

'The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting.

1. *The Temptation.*
   A great victory—now take it easy. So Absalom when he took Jerusalem from his father. So the boy when he gets a prize.
   'He that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.'
2. *How Joshua put it aside.*
   At once sets to work to reap fruits of victory. Lachish, Libnah, Eglon, Hebron, Debir. So the Apostles, as soon as they have power, set to work to reap fruits of Christ's victory.
   'The hand of the diligent shall bear rule.'
3. *Results.*
   The South vanquished but not possessed. Joshua patient as well as persevering. 'A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what 's heaven for?' Content with partial success. So the Apostles always hopeful though so much left undone.
   'In your patience ye shall win your souls.'
4. *Lesson.*
   Perseverance—'Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.'
   Patience—Be content with your wages.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR LESSON XIII

Hebron. The importance of Hebron will be easily measured by a reference to a Concordance. Not only was it the home of Abraham, but here Isaac was born, and Sarah died. Here also Isaac and Jacob lived part of their lives (Gen. xxxv. 27). Here the three patriarchs and their wives, except Rachel, were buried. Here in after days Samson brought the gates of the city of Gaza (Judg. xvi. 3), and here too David was anointed king over the house of Judah.

The Arabic name for it, El Khalil—the friend—shows why it is regarded as one of the four sacred cities of the Moslems; for in the cave of Machpelah, guarded with the most jealous restrictions, rests the body of the Friend of God. Dean Stanley, in an appendix to the first volume of the *Jewish Church*, gives a most interesting account of the visit of the Prince of Wales to Hebron in 1862, when the shrine, the sacred precincts of which had not been entered by any European except in disguise for six hundred years, was entered and examined. It is noteworthy that whilst the shrines of Abraham and Jacob were shown, that of Isaac was forbidden, on the ground that 'Isaac was proverbially jealous, and it was exceedingly dangerous to exasperate him.'

The modern town contains about eighteen thousand Moslems, and twelve hundred to fifteen hundred Jews. 'It is situated in a shallow valley surrounded by rocky hills, from which spring no fewer than twenty-five sources of water. Luxuriant vineyards still clothe the hills and vales, and produce some of the best grapes in Palestine, and groves of olive and fruit trees abound.'

Lachish. Sayce (*Early History of the Hebrews*, p. 255) writes:—'The great mound that covers its ruins has been excavated partly by Professor Flinders Petrie, partly by Dr. Bliss, and the large wall that surrounded it in the days of the Amorites, and before which the Israelites encamped, has been explored and measured. . . . Fragments of the pottery used by the Amorite defenders of the city in the days of Joshua can now be seen in the rooms of the Palestine Exploration Fund. The walls of Lachish, like those of the cities of Egypt, were built of crude brick, and were nearly thirty feet in thickness. It had, in fact, long been one of the principal fortresses of South Palestine. . . . Its capture, therefore, by the Israelites was a serious blow to the Canaanites in the southern part of the country.

Gezer. Dr. George Adam Smith (*Historical Geography*, p. 216) describes Gezer as 'one of the few remarkable bastions which the Shephelah flings out to the west—on a ridge running towards Ramleh, the most prominent object in view of the traveller from Jaffa towards Jerusalem. It is high and isolated, but fertile and well watered—a very strong post and striking landmark. . . . A city of the Canaanites, under a king of its own—Horam—Gezer is not given as one of Joshua's conquests, though the king is; but the Israelites *drave not out the Canaanites who dwelt at Gezer*, and in the hands of these it remained till its conquest by Egypt, when Pharaoh gave it with his daughter to Solomon, and Solomon rebuilt it.'

CHAPTER XI

AND it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard [1] *those things*, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph, 2. And to the kings that *were* on the north [2] of the mountains, and [3] of the plains south of Chinneroth, and in the [4] valley, and in the [5] borders of Dor on the west, 3. *And to* the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and *to* the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the [6] mountains, and *to* the Hivite under Hermon in the land of Mizpeh. 4. And they went out, they

[1] thereof.
[2] in the hill country.
[3] Arabah.
[4] lowland.
[5] heights.
[6] hill country.

1. Jabin. In later days the supremacy of this kingdom of Hazor is marked by the fact that one of its kings is styled King of Canaan (see Judg. iv. 2). Jabin means wise or intelligent, and was apparently an hereditary or official title of the King of Hazor.

Hazor. 'Its most probable situation is on one of the rocky heights of the northernmost valley of the Jordan' (Stanley). Its exact site has not been identified with absolute certainty, but Conder thinks we may read Hazor in the modern Arabic Hadireh, a mountain a little to the west of the waters of Merom, which could easily be made into a strong fortress. On the plains below the chariots named here for the first time could successfully be used. It was doubtless ordained by God's Providence that Jabin should delay making this formidable attack till the South was subdued and Joshua had returned to Gilgal.

He sent to Jobab king of Madon. The summons to join the confederacy is not confined to the kings and chiefs of his own district. He sends as far south as Shimron, a place a little to the west of Nazareth, and as far west as Achshaph, just above Ptolemais, the ancient Acre. 'It was a supreme effort, an imperious mandate like that of the fiery cross or the oriflamme in mediæval times.' And it was not confined to the royal cities we have mentioned, but an appeal to all the tribes yet unsubdued, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, and even as far north as to the Hivites living under the snowy peaks of Hermon.

4. With horses and chariots very many. 'The new and striking features of this battle, as distinct from those of Ai and Gibeon, consisted in the "horses and chariots very many" which now for the first time appear in the Canaanite warfare, and it was the use of these which probably fixed the scene of the encampment by the lake, along whose level shores they could have full play for their force' (Stanley). The chariots were probably made of wood, the tyres of the wheels being iron. In shape they were doubtless like those of Egypt, low carriages, entered

and all their hosts with them, much people, *even* as the sand that *is* upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many. 5. And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

6. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Be not afraid because of them: for to-morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire. 7. So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters

from behind, carrying two persons, 'one of whom managed the horses, while the other plied his weapons of war; but sometimes the warrior stood alone in his chariot, the reins being lashed around his body. They must have been expert riders to discharge arrows standing in a chariot with the horses in full gallop, while the horses were to be guided by the movements of the body.' It was the almost irresistible charge of these chariots that made the Israelites so much afraid of them.

Josephus, the Jewish historian (*Ant.* v. 1, 18), reckons the forces assembled at Merom at 300,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 20,000 chariots, an incredible number in itself, yet very suggestive of the magnitude of the effort now being made.

6. **Thou shalt hough their horses**—*i.e.* cut the sinews of the hinder hoofs. The sinew thus cut cannot be healed, and the horse is lamed for life. This direction was partly to keep the Israelites simple in their faith, that they might not rely too much on outward help, partly to prevent commercial transactions with Egypt, the principal source from which the supply of horses for Western Asia, and specially Palestine, would be drawn. Alliance with Egypt, the type of worldly power, is almost always condemned (cf. Isa. xxx. 1, 2; xxxvi. 9). It is not easy to see why the horses were 'houghed,' and not killed; it is not likely that so lamed they could be used for other purposes; and it is not in accord with the general spirit of kindness to animals expressed in the Law. It is to be noted that in this direction God meets the weakness of Israel; that part of the force most to be dreaded was to be entirely overcome. Note, if the journey took five days, Joshua did not get God's message of encouragement until the fourth day, when the march was nearly over. It was given to him on the eve of the battle 'for to-morrow.'

7. **Joshua came . . . suddenly.** Humanly speaking, Joshua's only chance was to take the enemy by surprise before they could get their chariots into line. The distance from Gilgal to Merom is about seventy miles, which, with a large host, and over untried difficult paths, would take the five days Josephus says that it occupied. A surprise movement would be certain to be effective, as the difficulties of retreat, with the lake on one side and the mountains on the other, would be wellnigh insuperable.

of Merom suddenly; and they fell upon them. 8. And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto great Zidon, and unto Misrephoth-maim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until *they* left them none remaining. 9. And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire. 10. And Joshua at that time turned back, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime *was* the head of all those kingdoms. 11. And they smote all the souls that *were* therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying *them*: there was not any left to breathe: and he burnt Hazor with fire. 12. And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, *and* he utterly destroyed them, [a] as Moses the servant of

[a] Num. xxxiii. 52; Deut. vii. 2, and xx. 16, 17.

8. **And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel.** It was clear to Joshua and his host that the victory was God's work from beginning to end, whether through the spirit of carelessness and stupidity in which the camp was surprised, or through the panic produced by the unexpected shout of Israel as they rushed down the gorges into the plain.

8. **Unto great Zidon.** Here called 'great,' as being the capital of Phœnicia. One division of the enemy fled north-west over the mountains to the coast, hardly expecting that Joshua would follow them so far; but he determined to break up for ever this confederacy, and so pursued them to the very gates of the city. Another division tried to escape to a place a little south of Sidon, here called Misrephoth-maim, probably the Sarepta of the New Testament. The name means warm springs, or smelting pits by the waters, taken from the characteristic feature of the place. A third division, instead of turning west, turned east to the valley of Mizpeh, at the foot of Mount Hermon. As a proof of the success of the attack, it should be noted that no part of the enemy had the courage to turn directly west or south. The men of Shimron and Achshaph would have endeavoured to escape to their homes in the south and west had they not been driven by the furious onslaught of the Israelites to find what refuge they could in the north.

10. **Turned back, and took Hazor.** Joshua was not satisfied with making the defeat as hopeless as possible, but determined to take Hazor, which stood on the cliffs, overlooking the valley where the battle had taken place. All here, including the king, were destroyed, and the city burnt to the ground.

the LORD commanded. 13. But *as for* the cities that stood [7] still in their strength, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; *that* did Joshua burn. 14. And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe. 15. [b] As the LORD commanded Moses his servant, so [c] did Moses command Joshua, and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses. 16. So Joshua took all that land, the [8] hills, and all the south [9] *country*, and all the land of Goshen, and the [4] valley, and the [3] plain, and the [8] mountain of Israel, and the [4] valley of the same; 17. *Even* from the mount Halak, that goeth up *to* Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon under mount Hermon: and all their kings he took, and smote them, and slew them. 18. Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. 19. There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the [d] Hivites the inhabitants of Gibeon: [10] all *other* they took in battle.

[7] on their mounds.
[b] Ex. xxxiv. 11.
[c] Deut. vii. 2.
[8] hill country.
[9] *omit.*
[d] ch. ix. 3.
[10] they took all.

13. The cities that stood still in their strength. Render, 'the cities standing each on its own hill.' This was the usual position for cities in Canaan; and the meaning here is that, with the exception of Hazor, Joshua left them alone, reserving their complete conquest for the tribes that should afterwards settle in the land.

16. So Joshua took all that land. This is a summary of the results of Joshua's work. The whole country from Halak—a range of mountains six miles south of the Dead Sea—to Baal-gad, north of the sea of Galilee, probably the Cæsarea Philippi of later days, was subjugated. This does not mean that the Canaanites were exterminated, but that there was no danger of any uprising. All the chiefs and kings of any importance had been put to death, and the land was in terror of the Israelites.

18. A long time. 'Five years at least. Caleb was forty years old when Moses sent him out of Kadesh-barnea as a spy, and eighty-five years old when, on the conquest of the land, he received his portion at the hands of Joshua. Thus forty-five years had elapsed since the former date, of which forty or thirty-eight had been spent in the wanderings of the wilderness. The campaigns of Joshua must therefore have occupied at least five or seven years for their accomplishment' (Maclear).

20. For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that *they* should come against Israel *in* battle, that *he* might destroy them utterly, *and* that they might have no favour, but that *he* might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses. 21. And at that time came Joshua, and cut off the
11 Anakim. [11] Anakims from the mountains, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the [6] mountains of Judah, and from all the [6] mountains of Israel: Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities. 22. There was none of the [11] Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in
12 did some remain. Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, [12] there remained. 23. So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance
e Num xxvi. 53. unto Israel [e] according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war.

20. **It was of the Lord to harden their hearts.** A reasonable and gentle disposition is due to God's grace; sinners who neither ask for it, nor believe in it, necessarily grow hard and obstinate, as the ground untouched by the rain grows hard. It is a direct result of sin, and is here ascribed to God, as being the Author of that moral law which, if broken, brings about hardness, as the law of gravitation sometimes results in broken bones. Pharaoh sets his face against the light of his own conscience, and so becomes hard; the Canaanites also sinned against their light, and so became hard. It is a most terrible judgment, and so we are taught to pray against it in the Litany, 'From hardness of heart, Good Lord, deliver us.'

22. **Only in Gaza, in Gath.** One of these renowned Anakim so widely held in terror by the Israelites, because of their great size, bore the name of Goliath of Gath, and met his death at the hands of David.

23. **And the land rested from war.** There was a cessation for a short time till the various tribes entered into their possessions. 'The Israelites no longer needed to war unitedly against the Canaanites.'

LESSON XIV

Obedient Faith

INTRODUCTION.—Refer to the work in which Joshua had been engaged. He is now resting with his soldiers at Gilgal. Suddenly bad news comes from the North. A great and powerful rising. This much more serious than that of the five kings. All Canaan except the part of the South already vanquished up in arms. Many kings—so large a host of soldiers that it could not be counted, and the dreaded chariots and horses. These Israel had heard of, but never seen. Joshua remembered them at the Red Sea. Unless God fought for them, quite impossible to avoid defeat.

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. Joshua's faith. Joshua had neither force nor weapons sufficient to withstand such a well-armed and mighty enemy. No good thinking *how* he is to win. His only duty to obey. He does this at once—leaves the camp with his soldiers, marches up the hot valley of the Jordan, but in watchful secrecy; for should it be found out, the host of Dor or Shimron may execute a flank movement and cut him off from his camp. When near the enemy scouts sent forward report that they are unprepared. Tired though they are with their long march, they fall upon them, and win a great victory.	1. Before narrating Joshua's action, point out— (*a*) That the difficulties God gives us to overcome are carefully graded. This great one comes after Jericho, Ai, and the five kings (1 Cor. x. 13). (*b*) That with the difficulty comes the promise to overcome it. See verse 6, 'Be not afraid.' Show that action is the best cure for a faint heart. Courage comes in the performance of our duty.
2. Joshua's obedience. The enemy so unprepared that they leave chariots and horses behind. Israel now in possession of this crowning advantage. Therefore no enemy could withstand them. Note their wondering admiration as they stand looking and rejoicing in them. Suddenly comes the command, the horses are to be lamed and the chariots burned. They are not to be allowed to use them. Joshua points out that they have won all their victories without them; that God has no pleasure in the strength of a horse; and that his order must be carried out.	2. Contrast with Joshua's striking obedience Saul's disobedience under much less strong temptation (1 Sam. xv.). Show that the danger of all success is reliance on our own powers, so God bids us cut off or submit ourselves to His own cutting off of that on which we are tempted to pride ourselves. Milton's success is accompanied by the loss of his sight, Beethoven's with the loss of his hearing, Nebuchadnezzar's with the loss of his reason. These better than the judgment which overtook Herod's pride.

LESSON XIV—*continued.* OBEDIENT FAITH

MATTER.

3. Joshua's victories.

Obedience always leads to further blessings. So Joshua not only wins the battle of Merom, but takes Hazor and all the royal cities by storm, slaying the kings, and thus effectually vanquishing the North. Great spoil fell into their hands; and the people felt that though their God refused to allow them to use horses, He was generous in the large gifts He lavished upon them. Having conquered the North, Joshua, it would seem, made another expedition to the South so as to remove every kind of fear.

METHOD.

3. God's rewards are far greater than the sacrifices He asks us to make. For one thing He asks us to give up, there are a hundred we may retain.

Note, we must not rest content with one conquest, but go over the same ground again and again till we feel we have really mastered it.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Obedient Faith.

'He became unto all them that obey Him the Author of Eternal Salvation.'—Heb. v. 9.

1. *Faith.*
   Faces difficulties.
   Relies on the bare word of God.
   Moves to rapid action.
   So Joshua, so Christ, the Leader of our Faith.
   Believe and you will conquer.
   'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.'

2. *Obedience.*
   Faith perfected by obedience.
   Difficulty in giving up our own interests when danger is past.
   Yet the people obey Joshua as Joshua obeys God. Contrast Saul.
   'Ye have purified your souls in obedience to the truth.'

3. *Results.*
   The whole North is given to Joshua's faith.
   The world is given to the Apostles' faith.
   Conquest of self given to the Christian's faith.
   'All things are possible to him that believeth.'

CHAPTER VIII. 30-35

THEN Joshua built an altar unto the LORD [1] God of Israel in mount Ebal, 31. As Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the [a] book of the law of Moses, an altar of [2] whole stones, over which no *man* hath lift up *any* iron: and they

[1] the God.

[a] Exod. xx. 25; Deut. xxvii. 5.
[2] unhewn.

For the reasons why this passage has been taken at the end of chapter xi., and not in the place it has in the Bible, see Additional Notes.

30. **Then Joshua built an altar.** The victories of Joshua practically placed the whole of the central part of the country in his hands. He was now able to carry out Moses' command and ratify the Law. 'By a grand national act it was to be declared in what character Israel meant to hold what it had received of God.' See Deut. xxvii. for the order of proceedings, and note the following:—

(*a*) Thou shalt set thee up great stones and plaster them with plaster, and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law when thou art passed over (verses 2, 3).

(*b*) There shalt thou build an altar unto the LORD thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt lift up no iron tool upon them (verse 5).

(*c*) Thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the LORD thy God, and thou shalt sacrifice peace offerings, and shalt eat there, and thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God (verses 6, 7).

(*d*) And Moses charged the people the same day, saying: 'These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people. . . . Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin, and these shall stand upon mount Ebal for the curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.'

In mount Ebal. We naturally ask why this important ceremony could not have been carried out at Gilgal—the headquarters? Why it was necessary to make a weary uphill march of thirty miles to Mount Ebal? It may be answered that Moses commanded that it should be there carried out. But why?

(1) *Because of its historic associations.* It was here that Abraham halted on the way from Chaldea, and here too that he built his first altar to the Lord. It was here also that Jacob first settled after his long sojourn in Mesopotamia, and bought land from the Shechemites. It would remind the people that long ago the country had as it were been claimed for Abraham and his descendants.

(2) *Because of its central position.* Moses recognised that when the people would be enabled to hold such a service as he had by God's will drawn up in the very centre of the land, then the country to a large extent would be theirs. In other words, he did not wish the service to be held till it was evident that God had given them the land.

(3) *Because of its suitability.* It was not only the most beautiful spot in Central Palestine, and therefore in itself suggestive of the milk

offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings. 32. And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. 33. And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them [3] over against mount Gerizim, and half of them [3] over against mount Ebal; [b] as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded [4] before, that they should bless the people of Israel.[5] 34. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the [6] blessings and cursings, according to all

[3] in front of.
[b] Deut. xi. 29 and vii. 12.
[4] *omit* before.
[5] first of all.
[6] blessing and the curse.

and honey promised to their fathers, but lying between two mountains peculiarly well adapted for the service that was to be held, the one by its extraordinary fertility suggesting the effect of God's blessing, the other by its barrenness the curse of God.

31. **And they offered thereon burnt offerings.** The first thing Joshua does is to offer 'the sacrifice of thanksgiving.' God's repeated mercies had been wonderful, and it was natural that national thanksgiving should precede the ratification of the Law.

32. **And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law.** It does not seem likely that the whole of the Law as we generally understand the word was written upon the stones; still less that the Book of Deuteronomy would be so inscribed; but rather that the Decalogue, or possibly the 'commandments proper,' the 'statutes,' and 'rights' contained in the Pentateuch. The method of writing was that commonly adopted in Egypt where stone walls or monumental stones are first plastered with lime and gypsum, and then inscribed with a stylus. Thomson (*Land and the Book*, p. 471) says that he has seen numerous specimens of such writing more than two thousand years old, and yet as distinct as when they were first written.

33. **And all Israel . . . stood on this side the ark and on that side.** The ark with the priests and the Levites was in the centre of the valley. On the sides of Mount Gerizim stood the numerous descendants of the six sons of Jacob's lawful wives; and over against them, on the sides of Mount Ebal, were those who had sprung from Reuben, whose great sin separated him from his own brothers Simeon, Levi, and Judah, and from the five handmaids of Leah and Rachel.

34. **The blessings and cursings.** Note, the blessings are not like the Beatitudes, characteristic of certain moral dispositions, as the cursings are, but describe the different spheres in which the faithful and God-fearing should meet with God's kindness—'in the city' and 'in the field,' in the house, the farm, and the garden, in their going out to work and their

that is written in the book of the law. 35. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, [c] with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.

[c] Deut. xxxi. 12.

returning home, in battle and in harvest—in fact, in all social relations. A wonderful future was before them if they remained loyal to their invisible King. On the other hand, they would find God's hand against them if they sinned. The sins to which their attention was directed were—(1) Idolatry; (2) contempt of parents; (3) dishonesty; (4) inhumanity; (5) injustice; (6) incest and unnatural crimes; (7) backbiting; (8) murder; (9) disloyalty. See Deut. xxvii. 11-26. It is remarkable that a people flushed with victory should at the very outset of their settlement in the land publicly and solemnly declare to themselves that the only conditions of success were righteousness and faith. In this vast audience of thousands of people probably but little was lost, owing to the remarkable acoustic properties of the valley in which they stood (see Judg. ix. 7 for another example), and owing to the fact noticed by Thomson (*Land and the Book*) that 'the people in these mountainous countries are able from long practice so to pitch their voices as to be heard distinctly at distances almost incredible.' The blessings and cursings were probably monotoned by the Levites, the people giving their assent with an Amen which must have sounded like thunder. Our Church bids her priests and people carry out the same observance in the order for Ash Wednesday.

LESSON XV

The Way to take Success

INTRODUCTION.—This Lesson gives a good opportunity for explaining the Commination, or Ash Wednesday Service, which is so widely misunderstood. Some think it unsuitable for prosperous England, and yet note that it was probably when Joshua had conquered the whole country that it was first used. Others that it is a form for imprecating our neighbours. The bare record of the Service sufficiently disproves that. Show that it is when we are prosperous that we ought to remind ourselves of dangers from sin.

MATTER.

1. The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving.

Picture the great procession of elders, soldiers, men and women, passing up the steep road from Gilgal till the hill country is reached, then along the high lands till at last Gerizim is seen. Skirting its base, Israel arrives at the beautiful valley

METHOD.

1. The teacher should show clearly on map or blackboard where Shechem is, and then picture the sacred journey. Illustrate by the service in Khartoum after the battle of Omdurman, and point out that Shechem, as the early home of Abraham, and as containing the

LESSON XV—*continued.* THE WAY TO TAKE SUCCESS

MATTER.	METHOD.
of Shechem. This march must have taken two days. It was like a sacred pilgrimage; and from the fact that it was not interfered with, the people might well believe that God had given the whole country into their hands.	ground which Jacob had bought, would have even more interest than Khartoum to us, though consecrated by General Gordon's death.
Show that their first work is to build an altar, and on it to offer burnt offerings as an expression of their gratitude for God's great mercies. Cf. the same order on return from the Captivity (Ezra iii. 2). Peace offerings also as a sign of their joy in being reconciled to God.	Point out the parallel—our parish churches with their memorials of the dead and the Service of Holy Communion, our 'Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving.'
2. **Act of faith in God's Goodness.** The next work is to inscribe on great stone slabs the words of the Law, the charter of their constitution. This done, the camp was divided. Show who they are who go to Mount Gerizim, and those who go to Mount Ebal, and why. Show who stand in the middle by the great stone. Then, amidst a great stillness, the blessings promised by God are recited. With joy all the people say 'Amen.'	2. Illustrate by the Creed, which is the summary of what God has done for us in Christ, and which is sometimes directed to be sung, and to which we give our Amen. Teach that after any conquest won we ought to offer our Sacrifice of Praise, and recite our Creed of Blessings.
3. **Act of faith in God's Justice.** It is not enough to confess that God is good, we must also confess that He is holy. Joshua makes this clear by requiring the people to assent with their own mouths to the righteousness of God's judgments upon sin in general and certain sins in particular. Ask what the sins are, and show the commonness of some, *e.g.* contempt of parents.	3. Explain the word 'cursed' as meaning separated from God. It is the terrible consequence of sin that the sinner—as Adam and Eve—hides himself away from God, and then becomes like the field on which the sun never shines and the rain never falls. Cut off by his own will from grace, he withers away (Heb. vi. 7, 8).
4. **Effect upon the people.** Israel must have felt after this service in hallowed ground how faithful God had been to His promises, how merciful He had been to their sins, but how dangerous it was to tamper with sin. Such a service at the outset of their career as a nation must have gone far to sober them, and make them realise that 'righteousness (alone) exalteth a nation.'	4. Show here the importance of the Commination Service, and the more so when England is prosperous.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

The Way to take Success.

'Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High.'

1. *Act of Thanksgiving.*
   Where? Shechem (Abraham-Jacob).
   The Church (Memorials of friends).
   How? Sacrificial. Burnt offerings and peace offerings—Christ's offering and our own—'we offer our souls and bodies.'
   When? After conquest of Canaan.
   So after conquest of difficulties, self.
2. *Act of faith in God's mercy.*
   The blessings assured by the priests testified to by the people.
   The gracious Acts of the Creed assured by the Church testified to by the people.
3. *Act of faith in God's justice.*
   Sentence passed on sin by the priests assented to by the people.
   So Commination Service.
4. *Effect.*
   Israel realises the love and holiness of God—is sobered in success.
   'Lest we forget.'
   England's Triumph followed by the warning.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE POSITION OF CHAPTER VIII. 30-35.

Dr. Espin, in his Notes on Joshua in the *Speaker's Commentary*, thinks, with justice, that these verses are out of their proper and original place, and for the following reasons:—

'(1.) The connection between viii. 29 and ix. 1 is natural and obvious, and in ix. 3 the fraud of the Gibeonites is represented as growing out of the alarm caused by the fall of Jericho and Ai.

'(2.) It is extremely unlikely that a solemnity of this nature in the very centre of the country should be undertaken by Joshua whilst the

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO CHAPTER VIII—*continued*

whole surrounding district was in the hands of the enemy, or that, if undertaken, it would have been carried out unmolested. For it appears (ver. 35) that "all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them," were present at it. The distance from Gilgal in the Jordan valley to Mount Ebal is full thirty miles; and so vast a host, with its non-effective followers, could certainly not have accomplished a march like this through a difficult country and a hostile population in less than three days. Moreover, in ix. 6, x. 6, 15, 43, the Israelites are spoken of as still encamping at Gilgal. If, then, the solemnity described in these verses was really transacted immediately after the fall of Ai, the host, with "its women, little ones, etc.," must have made the tedious and dangerous march to Shechem and back again, besides having to spend a day or two in the neighbourhood of the mountains for the preparation and performance of the solemnity. Nothing is said of special Divine interference; and in the absence of miraculous help, Joshua could hardly have accomplished this undertaking at the time suggested by the present position of verses 30-35 in the narrative.'

(3.) Nearly all the MSS. of the LXX. place verses 30-35 after ix. 2; we prefer to place them, with Dr. Espin, after chapter xi.

CHAPTERS XIV. 6-15; XV. 14-19

THEN the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadesh-barnea. 7. Forty years old *was* I when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and I brought him word again as *it was* in mine heart. 8. Nevertheless my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly [a] followed the LORD my God. 9. And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God. 10. And now behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, *even* since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, [1] while *the children of* Israel wandered in the wilderness: and

[a] Num. xiv. 24.

[1] while Israel walked in.

XIV. 6. **The children of Judah came.** It is a sign of Caleb's popularity in his tribe that they come with him to back his claim. There is no jealousy, no feeling that he is acting selfishly; but, on the contrary, a sense of pride that their representative among the spies had been loyal to God.

The thing that the Lord said. 'Him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it' (Num. xiv. 24).

8. **I wholly followed the Lord.** Caleb is here using God's words of himself, not his own. See Num. xiv. 24, 'My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and *hath followed me fully*.' See also Moses' account of the Divine approval, and Deut. i. 36, 'He shall see it . . . because he hath wholly followed the Lord.'

9. **Moses sware.** See Deut. i. 36, where Moses' words are almost identical with these that Caleb remembers.

10. **These forty and five years.** An interesting chronological note. Israel, we know, was in the wilderness for thirty-eight years before they reached Jordan; seven years therefore had elapsed between the crossing of the Jordan and this first attempt on Joshua's part to settle the division of the land. The writer refers to this when he speaks of the struggle with the kings of the North as lasting '*a long time*.'

now, lo, I *am this* day fourscore and five years old.[b]
11. As yet I *am as* strong *this* day as *I was* in the day
that Moses sent me: as my strength *was* then, even so *is*
my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in.
12. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the
LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day
how the [2]Anakims *were* there, [3]and *that* the cities *were*
great *and* fenced: [4]if so be the LORD *will be* with me,
[5]then I shall *be able to* drive them out, as the LORD said.
13. And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son
of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. 14. [c]Hebron
therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of
Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he
wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. 15. [6]And the
[d]name of Hebron before *was* Kirjath-arba; which *Arba*
was [7]a great man among the [2]Anakims. And the land had
rest from war.
XV. 14. And Caleb drove thence [g]the three sons of Anak,
Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the children of Anak.

[b] Ecclus. xlvi. 9.
[2] Anakim.
[3] and cities great and fenced.
[4] it may be that.
[5] and I shall drive.
[c] ch. xxi. 12; 1 Mac. ii. 56.
[6] Now.
[d] ch. xv. 13.
[7] the greatest.
[g] Judg. i. 10.

12. **This mountain**, *i.e.* the mountain of Hebron. 'Hebron is, in fact, only four hundred feet lower than Helvellyn' (Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 102).

Whereof the Lord spake. Unless there was a definite promise, of which we have no record, we are to understand that Caleb implies that God, in His words, 'To him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon' (Deut. i. 36), had given him Hebron. We know that it was one of the places where he had been (see Num. xiii. 22). And it was from Eshcol near by that they brought the grapes, 'the one token of the Promised Land which was laid at the feet of Moses.'

The Anakims. This strong people had retaken Hebron after Joshua left it, and were now in possession. 'It was now the city of the four giants'—Anak and his three gigantic sons.

13. **Joshua blessed him.** The commander-in-chief not only gives his old companion in arms the inheritance Moses had promised, but the blessing of God upon his enterprise. As Moses had blessed him, so he blesses Caleb. In those days that was felt to be the chief thing, carrying with it both strength and success.

15. **The name of Hebron before was Kirjath-arba**, *i.e.* the city of Arba, a famous chieftain amongst the Anakim.

XV. 14. **Caleb drove thence.** As a proof of his unimpaired strength, Caleb himself led the attack on Hebron, driving out of it three strong families of the Anakim who were the governing power in the city.

15. And he went up thence to the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before *was* Kirjath-sepher. 16. And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. 17. And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife. 18. And it came to pass, as she came *unto him*, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted off *her* ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou? 19. Who answered, Give me a blessing; for [8] thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs.

[8] that thou hast set me in the land of the south, give.

15. **Debir.** See note on x. 38 (page 81).

17. **Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb.** Was Othniel nephew or brother to Caleb? These words do not decide the question. In xiv. 6 Caleb is called the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and perhaps that is the meaning here: 'Othniel the son of the Kenezite and the brother of Caleb. In this case we should have Othniel marrying his own niece. This which is unlawful with us was not so with the Jews. It was not only not forbidden by the Mosaic Law, but we are told was by the Rabbins rather considered meritorious' (*Speaker's Commentary*, vol. ii. p. 78).

18. **As she came unto him.** Achsah's prudence is most praiseworthy. She had realised that the dowry which her father had given Othniel wanted one thing to make it complete, namely, the much-prized gift of water; and on meeting her husband for the first time, she begged him to ask her father for some valuable springs close by the property. Othniel was too shy, or we may say too chivalrous, not caring to disparage his bride by asking for anything beside her, so Achsah herself asks.

19. **A south land,** *i.e.* a dry and thirsty land (see Ps. cxxvi. 4). Debir, important as it was, depended for its life on the springs that flowed beneath it. 'Underneath the hill on which Debir stood is a deep valley, rich with verdure; from a copious rivulet, which rising at the crest of the glen falls with a continuity unusual in the Judæan hills down to its lowest depth.' On the possession of these upper and lower 'bubblings' so contiguous to her lover's prize, Achsah has set her heart. And being a clever woman, she knows how to get it. Her ready interference in behalf of her husband's interests is in marked contrast with the retiring shyness that characterises, with but few exceptions, the women of the Old Testament.

LESSON XVI

Rewards

INTRODUCTION.—To-day the lesson is about Rewards. As man gives prizes to those who work hard and succeed, so God will. This has been promised (1 Cor. iii. 8). But there are special rewards for special work. See S. Matt. v. 11, 12, and ask who deserves the best prize—the boy who is sharp and clever, and so easily stands first in his class, or the boy who

with another stands out against the whole school for right against wrong. Which is the harder work? To-day we are going to talk about a man who with one other dared to stand alone against all his countrymen, even when they took up stones to kill him. He lived to secure an earthly reward, but not all so. See Acts vii. 59, 60.

Matter.	Method.
1. Caleb persecuted. We look back forty-five years. Caleb, then in the prime of life, just chosen by his tribe to represent them in the dangerous mission of spying Palestine. Returns with plenty of encouragement to his brethren—'the land is an exceeding good land.' 'Let us go up at once, for we are well able to overcome it,' but narrowly escapes death by stoning, for the people will not receive his words. Ten of the twelve spies die for their unbelief (see Num. xiv.); Joshua and Caleb alone saved. Since then he has occupied an important position in Israel.	1. Here ask for examples of those who once were persecuted, and afterwards won earthly rewards, Joseph, Moses, David. Then speak of Caleb's patience. His faith has been waiting over forty years for its promised reward, and now backed up by the tribe, he asks for it. Note his reasons—he has no wish to rest, but to take the home of his ancestors out of the hands of the Anakim.
2. Caleb rewarded. Hebron was the place Caleb wished for, partly because of its associations with Abraham his ancestor (there Abraham and Sarah died, and there their bodies rested in the cave that Abraham bought, Gen. xxiii. 17, 18), partly because from the Hebron valley they had brought the great cluster of grapes which was too heavy for one man to carry, and in them had a practical proof of the advantages of the soil and situation. It seems likely that Joshua and Caleb brought the grapes to encourage the people to go up and take the land; if this be so, Caleb would be specially interested in the place where he found them. But note, Caleb does not ask for a place which was at that time in Joshua's hands, but for permission to advance against the Anakim (who were very much dreaded by the Israelites), and take it for himself. His reward came to him, firstly, in the form of a hard piece of work.	2. Note how a boy's prizes are not always what he wants. Sometimes he gets what he already has. God's prizes fit the person who deserves them, but that they may be valued they must first be won. Illustrate by our Lord's answer to the sons of Zebedee, which implies not only that there are places of varying distinction in God's kingdom, but that the best will be given to those who, by endurance and suffering, have shown themselves most worthy of them.

LESSON XVI—*continued.* REWARDS

MATTER.

3. Caleb rewarding.

Joshua's glad welcome to Caleb's request leads him to desire to emulate it. He, too, would like to enjoy the blessing that comes from giving, the joy that comes from inspiring others to work. The offer of his daughter's hand to the soldier who took Debir inspires Othniel to attempt the task. And this gift he completes at Achsah's request by giving the upper and lower springs on which its value would greatly depend. So the faith of Caleb quickens the faith of Othniel, and that of Othniel the faith of his tribe.

METHOD.

3. The rewards and gifts of others should make us generous. The pleasure received in gaining a prize should lead us to stimulate others by giving prizes. Illustrate by David's life. Jonathan's love for him (1 Sam. xviii. 4) led him to show like love to his own soldiers (1 Chron. xi. 15-19). Contrast with this the parable of the Unmerciful Servant.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Rewards.

'Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.'—1 Cor. iii. 8.

1. *Promised by God.*
   'Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour' (1 Cor. iii. 8). Will more than answer our best expectations.
   So Caleb wins Hebron, David a kingdom, the Christian disciple every blessing—houses, brethren, sisters, parents, children, lands.
2. *Given to the brave.*
   So to Caleb who, with Joshua, stood against Israel.
   So to S. Paul who, at Rome, stood against the world.
   So to all who overcome.
   'To him that overcometh I will give.'
3. *For encouragement.*
   (*a*) That the brave may become braver. Gift of Hebron stirs Caleb's valour.
   (*b*) That the brave may make others brave. Caleb rewards Othniel.

CHAPTERS XIII. 1, 7, 8; XIV. 1-5; XVII. 14-18; XVIII. 1-10.

NOW Joshua was old *and* stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old *and* stricken in years, and there remaineth *yet* very much land to be possessed. 7. Now therefore divide this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half tribe of Manasseh, 8. With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which Moses gave them, beyond Jordan eastward, *even* as Moses the servant of the LORD gave them.

[1] inheritances.
[2] took.
[a] Num. xxxiv. 17.
[3] fathers' *houses* of.
[4] unto them, by the lot of their inheritance, as the LORD commanded, etc.

XIV. 1. And these *are the* [1] *countries* which the children of Israel [2] inherited in the land of Canaan, [a] which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the [3] fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, distributed [4] for inheritance to them. 2. By lot *was* their

XIII. **1. Was old.** 'Joshua was now nearly ninety years old. It was time, therefore, that he should carry out the great design which he was appointed to execute, and divide the land among the tribes' (Deane).

Very much land to be possessed. This was no argument for postponing the division; on the contrary, it was likely to be carried out with more vigour by the individual tribes in their endeavour to make what was given them really their own.

XIV. **1. Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun.** The general superintendence of the division was in the hands of the two great heads—the one Ecclesiastical and the other Civil—but they were to be assisted by 'the heads of the fathers of the tribes,' whom Moses had nominated some ten years previously (Num. xxxiv. 17-29). Keil notices that Eleazar is mentioned before Joshua, and gives as a reason that as high priest he represented the government of the Lord in Israel.

2. By lot. Certain principles of division had been already indicated in the blessings of Jacob and Moses, but these were too indefinite on which to base any division that was likely to prove generally acceptable. Consequently, Joshua and Eleazar had recourse to lot, which would put the whole matter for decision into the hands of God (Prov. xvi. 33). It has been suggested in the *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. ii. p. 72, that two urns were employed, one containing a description of the several districts to be allotted, the other the names of the tribes; and the portion of each tribe

inheritance, [b]as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes, and *for* the half tribe. 3. For Moses had given the inheritance of two tribes and a half tribe on the *other* side Jordan: but unto the Levites he gave none inheritance among them. 4. For the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim: therefore they gave no part unto the Levites in the land, save cities to dwell *in*, with their suburbs for their cattle and for their substance. 5. [c]As the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did, and they divided the land.

[b] Num. xxvi. 55, and xxxiii. 54.

[c] Num. xxxv. 2; ch. xxi. 2.

would then be determined by a simultaneous drawing from the two urns. Whatever method was employed, it would seem clear that only the relative positions of the tribes were thus indicated, the limits and borders of the portions so determined 'being left to be adjusted subsequently according to the number and wants of the tribe to be provided for.'

This mode of assignment by lot places the conquest of Palestine, even in that remote and barbarous age, in favourable contrast with the arbitrary caprice by which the lands of England were granted away to the Norman chiefs (Arnold's *History of Rome*, i. 266). We know that it was customary amongst the Greeks and Romans. Maclear notes that it was a standing custom of the Athenians to divide the land of conquered enemies by lot.'

4. For the children of Joseph were two tribes. The writer desires to explain how if Levi had no portion, nine and a half tribes needed to be accommodated when only two and a half were disposed of on the east. He therefore tells us that Joseph counted two, Manasseh and Ephraim both having separate portions.

No part unto the Levites. The Levites were endowed with cities, cattle, and all that was necessary for their sustenance. It was important that they should be free from the turmoil of war and fighting that they might look after the Temple worship and attend to the education of the people. Their distribution amongst the tribes and their endowment by tithes and offerings anticipated the present parochial system of the Church.

With their suburbs—*i.e.* pasture-lands, as in the margin of the R.V. The Levites not only had cities, but also commons for grazing their cattle.

5. They divided the land. This was not undertaken all at once. Properly speaking, there were three divisions—(1) Of the land on the east by Moses before Israel crossed Jordan; (2) of the land assigned to Judah and Ephraim by Joshua and Eleazar in Gilgal; (3) of the rest of the land divided amongst the seven by Joshua and Eleazar at Shiloh. Why the second and third were not taken together is not clear, though it is implied in Joshua's words (xviii. 3) that a sluggish cowardice characterised the seven, as though they were unwilling to leave the central home and make

XVII. 14. And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me *but* one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I *am* a great people, forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto? 15. And Joshua answered them, If thou *be* a great people, *then* get thee up to the [5]wood *country*, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the [6]giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee. 16. And the children of

[5] forest.
[6] Rephaim; since the hill country of Ephraim is.

a settlement for themselves. Judah was stimulated by Caleb's heroism, and Ephraim stirred by jealousy of Judah. To Judah was assigned the mountainous south country, which had within its bounds the one sacred spot where the bones of Abraham and Sarah rested. The Dead Sea formed their east coast, the land of the Philistines their western frontier. Jerusalem lay just outside their boundary on the north, and Edom bounded them on the south. Ephraim had the centre of the land, including some of the finest parts of Palestine, the vale of Shechem, and the great and fertile plain of Sharon.

XVII. 14. **Why hast thou given me but one lot.** It is difficult to understand the ground of this complaint, which was apparently made by Manasseh as well as Ephraim (see verse 17). They had between them one lot and a half on the west of Jordan, and half a lot on east of Jordan. No doubt they expected Joshua as an Ephraimite to favour their petition. His answer is an admirable expression of the justice and good-nature that were such strong elements in his character.

I am a great people. Their boast was well grounded. 'In the first census they outnumbered every tribe but Judah; at the second numbering in the plains of Moab, while Judah's warriors amounted to 76,000, the Manassites and Ephraimites together were 85,000' (Deane).

The Lord hath blessed me. Cf. Jacob's words (Gen. xlviii. 20; xlix. 25, 26), predicting every kind of blessing for the children of his favourite son Joseph.

15. **If thou be a great people, then get thee up to the wood country.** Apparently Joshua here gives them permission to take as much as they could get with their own sword. This, then, was another principle in the division of the land; the boundaries of the portions assigned by lot were to be left to the valour of the tribes. By 'the wood country' is probably meant the range of forest land which runs from Mount Gilboa to Mount Carmel. The whole of this afterwards fell to Issachar, but at this time it was open for Joseph to occupy it if he chose. Joshua recommends them to clear the forests of the Perizzites and giants, and settle it for themselves.

16. **The hill is not enough.** The children of Joseph reply that even if that were done they would not have enough. What they wanted was the fertile vale of Esdraelon, but to get possession of that was more than they could manage by their own hand, they therefore imply that Israel should get it for them. How could they unassisted be a match for the people of Beth-shean and Jezreel, who had chariots of iron!

Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, *both they* who *are* of Beth-shean and her towns, and *they* who *are* of the valley of Jezreel. 17. And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, *even* to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou *art* a great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot *only*: 18. But the [7] mountain shall be thine; for [8] it *is* a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the outgoings of it shall be thine: for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, *and* though they *be* strong.

[7] hill country.

[8] though it is a forest, thou.

XVIII. 1. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together *at* Shiloh, and set up the [9] tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them. 2. And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not *yet* [10] received

[9] tent of meeting.

[10] divided.

17. **Thou art a great people.** Joshua replies with great wisdom. It was obviously unfair for them to claim the help of Israel for more than was actually given them by lot, but he did not say so. It was better to stimulate them to exertion and courage, so he tells them they are quite strong enough to occupy both mountain and valley. 'The mountain shall be thine . . . and the outgoings, *i.e.* the valley beneath it, shall be thine.' In spite of this promise, Ephraim and Manasseh were too cowardly to undertake the work, and the beautiful valley fell partly to Zebulun and partly to Issachar.

XVIII. 1. **Assembled together at Shiloh.** For over seven years the central camp had been at Gilgal, near Jericho; but now the south and centre of the land were occupied by the tribes of Judah, Ephraim, and Manasseh. Gilgal was out of the way, especially as it was the centre of worship. A change was necessary, and Beth-el would probably have been chosen because of its sacred associations had it not been at this time in the hand of the enemy (Judg. i. 23-27). Looking for a spot at once safe, retired, and central, they settled upon a place which they afterwards named Shiloh, as a token of their gratitude for the *rest* God had given His people. We are told: 'It was a central point for all Israel, equidistant from north and south, easily accessible to the Trans-Jordanic tribes, and in the heart of that hill-country which Joshua first subdued, and which remained to the end of Israel's history the district least exposed to the attacks of Canaanitish or foreign invaders' (Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 162).

The tabernacle of the congregation—*i.e.* the tent of meeting. Not the gathering of the worshippers only, but the meeting of God with His people, to commune with them, to make Himself known to them, was what the name embodied (see Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*).

their inheritance. 3. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, How long *are* you slack to go to possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?
[11] Appoint for you. 4. [11] Give out from among you three men for *each* tribe: and I will send them, and they shall rise, and go through the land, and describe it according to the inheritance of them; and they shall come *again* to me. 5. And they shall divide it into seven parts: Judah shall abide in
[12] his border. [12] their coast on the south, and the house of Joseph shall
[13] border. abide in their [13] coasts on the north. 6. Ye shall therefore describe the land *into* seven parts, and bring *the description* hither to me, that I may cast lots for you here before the
[14] For. LORD our God. 7. [14] But the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of the LORD *is* their inheritance: and Gad, and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave them. 8. And the men arose, and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, that I may here cast lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh. 9. And the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts in a book, and came *again* to Joshua to the host *at* Shiloh. 10. And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.

3. **How long are you slack?** The seven tribes preferred living together in safety and peace to fighting for their possessions. So far they had not ventured to ask Joshua to let them choose their lots.

4. **Give out from among you three men.** Joshua now appointed a commission consisting of twenty-one representatives of the seven tribes to go through the rest of the land not yet assigned, and describe it, *i.e.* to give a general estimate of its resources and an account of its characteristics.

6. **Ye shall therefore describe the land into seven parts.** This seems to imply some measurements by which the cities and land were divided into seven portions. It would be interesting to know the principles on which this division was made.

9. **And . . . described it . . . in a book.** We are here naturally reminded of our own Domesday Book. There is nothing to show that such a book was beyond the ability of the Israelitish chiefs.

LESSON XVII

The Inheritance Divided

INTRODUCTION.—Begin by describing a group of boys disputing over some contest. There are four winners and only one prize. Some of the winners were handicapped at the start, and their friends are saying that they should have larger shares. Who is to decide? How difficult to divide fairly! Let us first settle what kind of a person we should like to have as judge. The judge should be unselfish and disinterested. On what principles should he divide? (1) He would wherever possible recognise distinct merit; (2) he would, so far as possible, consult the interests of those who are to have shares; (3) where merit was equal, and a right decision very difficult, he would ask God's guidance. Now we shall see that these are the principles on which Joshua decides the difficult question of dividing Palestine. We must first note what had to be divided.

MATTER.

1. The Inheritance.

God had promised to give Israel the land flowing with milk and honey. Now it was theirs. Note the size, compared to Wales, or more exactly about 180 miles long from Dan to Beersheba, and about 50 miles broad. But though so small, the country very varied—the flat plains by the sea—the low hill-country between the plains and the mountains—the mountains—the deep Jordan valley, and the great plain of Esdraelon that cut the country in two. The land, too, very broken, 'almost as much divided into petty provinces as Greece.' Different soils, too, and differences of climate—sub-tropical in some parts and sub-alpine in others. All these features made division difficult, and the difficulty was added to by the fact that it was not entirely theirs; the enemy, though divided, broken, and subdued, still occupied parts of it.

METHOD.

1. Explain the word 'inheritance,' and refer to the Catechism where we are called 'inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.' Show that the blessings of this kingdom are very varied—some we enjoy in this life, others we look forward to. Some are the privileges attached to positions in the Church, others the advantages and gifts offered by the Church, such as the knowledge of God, the gift of the Holy Ghost, the varied operations of the Spirit as shown in 1 Cor. xii. 7-10, and His blessed fruits noted in Gal. v. 22.

Those we look forward to are given in Rev. ii. 11, 26, 27; iii. 5, 21.

LESSON XVII—*continued.* THE DIVIDED INHERITANCE

MATTER.	METHOD.
2. The Judges. Joshua and Eleazar. Why? Both were disinterested, Eleazar because, being a priest, he was not allowed to hold property; Joshua because, though virtually king, he wanted nothing beyond a quiet resting-place, where he might prepare for his death.	2. Show that God's heroes have never cared about property or acquisition of wealth. So Moses, Abraham (note his unselfishness in giving Lot the first choice), Samuel, Joshua, and they consequently through their disinterestedness had great influence over others. Go on to speak of *our* Judge, His entire unselfishness. Give examples.
3. The Principles of Division. (*a*) *Recognition of Merit.* Joshua was quite clear that Judah, in Caleb, had a prior claim over all the rest of the tribes because of Caleb's loyalty to God. Judah, therefore, has the first choice.	3. (*a*) Show that our Lord will recognise merit in the New Kingdom. 'Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' And will apportion His offices and positions according to the powers and abilities of those who have won the new life (see the Parable of the Pounds, S. Luke xix.).
(*b*) *Recognition of Preferences.* The bolder and stronger tribes had already decided what portions they would prefer. Ephraim would wish to have the country about Shechem, which their ancestor Jacob had bought, and where they hoped to lay the bones of Joseph; Manasseh, the other tribe descended from Joseph, had already been partly provided for on the east by Moses, and would naturally wish to be near Ephraim on the west; Gad and Reuben had obtained their choice; Levi had no claim; Benjamin, Simeon, Dan, Asher, Zebulun, Issachar, and Naphtali still remained to be provided for. Note that preference in this case meant energy and resolution. To leave the comfortable and safe camp and to occupy territory by fighting demanded pluck and spirit.	(*b*) Point out that it was so in the beginning of the kingdom. To S. John was given the privilege of caring for the mother of the Lord, to S. Peter the apostleship of the circumcision, to S. Paul the apostleship of the Gentiles, because they were specially fitted for those particular duties. It will be so in the new world. Natural inclinations will find their satisfaction.
(*c*) *God's guidance.* This was only sought so far as it was necessary. The division into seven different portions was assigned to special representatives, the selection was decided by lot. Note how the lots were cast. Note, too, how Joshua chides the slackness and laziness of these seven tribes in making no claim for a portion of the land.	(*c*) Point out that this principle was adopted in allotting the place of Judas to S. Matthias. And draw attention to the fact that the right hand and the left of Christ's throne is not *His* to give, but is in the Father's hands for those for whom it has been prepared.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

The Inheritance divided.

'Dividing to every man severally as He will.'—1 Cor. xii. 11.

1. *What had to be divided?*
   Palestine—country varied in soil—climate—features.
   So too an infinite variety in the New Kingdom.
   'I go to prepare a place for you.'

2. *Who appointed to divide?*
   Joshua, because Commander; Eleazar, because High Priest.
   Christ, because Son of Man (S. John v. 27).
   'He hath given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.'

3. *Principles of Division.*
   (*a*) *Merit.* Judah first, Ephraim second.
   So also ten cities to the man whose diligence has gained ten pounds, and five to him who has won five.
   So also in the Church: to S. John the care of S. Mary, to S. Peter the circumcision, to S. Paul the Gentiles.
   'Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given us.'

   (*b*) *Preference.* Moral characteristics of the tribes recognised.

   (*c*) *God's will.* Final choice rests with God.
   So in the New Kingdom: 'To sit on My right hand . . . is not Mine to give.'
   So 'the last shall be first, and the first last.'

   (*d*) *Enterprise.* Division allows room for enterprise. Ephraim encouraged to win more for herself.
   So too it may be in the new life.
   'To him that overcometh will I give power over the nations.'

CHAPTERS XX. 1-9; XXI. 1-3

THE LORD also spake unto Joshua, saying, 2. Speak to the children of Israel, saying, [1] Appoint out for you [a] cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses: 3. That the [2] slayer that killeth *any* person unawares *and* unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood. 4. And [3] when he that doth flee unto one of those cities [4] shall stand *at* the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city,[4] they

[1] Assign you the.
[a] Exod. xxi. 13; Num. xxxv. 6, xi. 14; Deut. xix. 2.
[2] manslayer.
[3] he shall flee.
[4] *insert* and.

XX. 1. **Appoint out for you cities of refuge.** In all early stages of society 'the duty of punishing manslaughter rests, not with public authority, but with the kin of the slain as avengers of blood.' And this rule is found amongst the Arab tribes and other wild peoples at the present day. Bishop Patterson's life was taken in place of five lives lost at Nukapu, in the Santa Cruz group, as the five knots in the palm branch placed upon his body clearly showed. It is difficult to see what other rule can be adopted where there are no recognised judges. In Israel the law was allowed, with an important modification. Wilful murder must be punished by the ordinary operation of the law; but if the case were one of manslaughter, the manslayer should have the opportunity of escape.

3. **That the slayer that killeth any person unawares.** The law of manslaughter was much more strictly guarded in Israel than it is with ourselves. Only such cases were considered manslaughter as could be clearly proved to have been accidental, without enmity or desire to do harm. A quarrel in which a man was killed would not come under manslaughter in Israel, though it might in England, provided it could be shown that there was no intent to kill. The Mosaic law was both stricter and gentler than laws which have prevailed elsewhere, stricter than that which prevailed amongst the Greeks and Romans, where places of sanctuary were provided for criminals of every kind, gentler than that which was common amongst savage peoples, such as the Canaanites, where no provision was made to meet the cases of accidents.

4. **Shall declare his cause.** When the manslayer arrived at the city he was to state his case before the elders, who, if satisfied, would receive him provisionally. When the avenger arrived, the whole matter would be gone into again before the assembly of the city, and both sides being heard, judgment would be given. If given in favour of the manslayer, he would have the privileges of the city till the death of the high priest, when he would have liberty to return home.

shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them. 5. And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the [2]slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour [5]unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime. 6. And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, *and* [b] until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the [2]slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled. 7. And they [6]appointed Kedesh in Galilee in [7]mount Naphtali, and Shechem in [7]mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba, which *is* Hebron, in the [7]mountain of Judah. 8. And on the *other* side Jordan [8]*by* Jericho eastward, they assigned [c]Bezer in the wilderness [9]upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh. 9. These were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth *any* person [10]at unawares might

[5] unawares.

[b] Num. xxxv. 25.

[6] set apart.
[7] the hill country of.

[8] at.
[c] Deut. iv. 43; 1 Chron. vi. 78.
[9] in.

[10] unwittingly.

7. And they appointed. Note the marginal reading in the Revised Version, 'they sanctified,' *i.e.* they set apart for a sacred purpose; the cities became sanctuaries, *i.e.* sacred places preserving the land from the sin of bloodguiltiness (Num. xxxv. 33, 34). Two principles guided their choice: (*a*) They must be easy of access; (*b*) they must be governed by those who would be able to deal with the difficult questions involved. A glance at the map will be sufficient to show how the first was carried out. Three were chosen on the east, and three on the west of Jordan; they were about equidistant from one another, so that the farthest distance for any refugee to traverse would not probably exceed thirty miles. The second principle was observed by selecting the six from the Levitical cities. The Levites were not only the most intelligent, but from being spared the ordinary duties of the Israelite, had time not only for making the judicial investigation that was necessary, but for perfecting themselves in the administration of justice.

Kedesh . . . Shechem . . . Hebron. Shechem and Hebron, not only from their situation, but their importance, would naturally be chosen. Kedesh was the most important place in the north.

8. They assigned Bezer. From Deut. iv. 41 sqq., it appears that Moses had already selected the three Eastern Cities of Refuge.

flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

[11] fathers' *houses.*

XXI. 1. Then came near the heads of the [11] fathers of the Levites unto Eleazar the priest, and unto Joshua the son of Nun, and unto the heads of the [11] fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel; 2. And they spake unto them at Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, [d] The LORD commanded by the hand of Moses to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle. 3. And the children of Israel gave unto the Levites out of their inheritance, at the commandment of the LORD, these cities and their suburbs.

d Num. xxxv. 2.

XXI. 1. **The heads of the fathers of the Levites.** Note the prophecy of Jacob (Gen. xlix. 10)—

'Simeon and Levi are brethren,
Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.
I will *divide them in Jacob*,
And *scatter them in Israel*.'

This was now to be fulfilled in a different way from that expected. By their loyalty at Horeb (Exod. xxxii. 25-29) the Levites had atoned for their sin, and the words of their ancestor became a source of pride instead of shame, for they were divided and scattered in Israel in order that they might influence, guide, and teach the nation. They became the royal bodyguard waiting exclusively on God. The scattering of Simeon was very different; first came the reduction in numbers, then its gradual abandonment of the land given to it.

2. **The Lord commanded.** From Num. xxxv., where these commands are given, we learn the following directions: (1) The cities were to be chosen from the tribes, those having most territory to give most cities; (2) besides the cities, they were to have land about them to the extent of nearly a mile on every side, for the feeding of cattle, etc. In the apportionment of the cities we find that Naphtali is the only tribe that gives three cities, all the other tribes giving four, even Benjamin with its very small territory, and Judah and Simeon giving nine. It was probably found that the tribes were ready to welcome into their possessions those who would be most valuable helpers in the education of the people.

LESSON XVIII

Unity, Peace, and Concord

INTRODUCTION.—Place the title on the Blackboard. Ask where the words are found, and why there? Illustrate by contrasting a family or nation at peace with one divided against itself, *e.g.* England now and during the Civil War, and show from the example that the three strong elements in Peace are a Common Worship, Justice, and a Common Education. We shall see in this Lesson how God provided these blessings for Israel.

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. A common Worship and Unity. God commanded that there should be but one Temple and one Altar. And to this every citizen must go up at the three great annual festivals. So three times a year the whole people were gathered together side by side in one common act of worship. Such services would make them feel one as nothing else could. But besides this, another means was provided for fostering unity. The Priests and Levites, who were bound by their profession and common membership in one tribe to be loyal to the Temple and its faith, were scattered abroad throughout the land in priestly cities. By their presence and influence they led the people who lived far away from Shiloh not only to come up to the Tabernacle services as they were commanded, but to maintain their interest in the life of the capital.	1. Illustrate by our cathedral system. Every cathedral which is the church of the diocese has a number of clergy attached to it, called canons, because they have a common *rule* of devotion, who are scattered throughout the diocese, and lead their parishioners to take an interest in the religious life that lies beyond their parishes. Illustrate by the title of 'The Book of Common Prayer,' and show how from time to time efforts have been made, by translating the service into English, by giving the people a part in it, to make it a service in *common*.
2. Common Laws and Peace. Civil injustice the greatest curse a land can bear. Very important that the guilty should not be shielded from punishment, and that the innocent should not be punished without cause. See how God's law provides for this. Six Cities of Refuge quite sufficient for a country	2. Illustrate by the sin of Achan and Saul's sin against the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 1), and show that the judgment which then fell upon all the people was due to undiscovered guilt. Refer to the prayer in the Litany, 'That it may please Thee to bless and keep the Magistrates, giving

LESSON XVIII—*continued.* UNITY, PEACE, AND CONCORD

MATTER.	METHOD.
not much larger than Wales. Note '*refuge*' from the results of accident, not from crime. Note, too, they are priestly cities, therefore containing men who could take a more unprejudiced view than the tribe where the accident occurred. Note also the advantage at that time of the important legal matters being largely in the hands of members of one family, who would be able to act in harmony with one another, so that there would not be different interpretations of the Law in different parts of the country.	them grace to execute justice and to maintain truth.' Here explain carefully the rules affecting those who sought the privilege of sanctuary in the Cities of Refuge, and illustrate by the Sanctuary Knocker at Durham (see Additional Note) how similar privileges were granted in England until the administration of justice was made certain.
3. Common Education and Concord. The Israelites at this time very much in the position of the negroes in America to-day—only just out of slavery; their parents had been slaves in Egypt. Education very necessary; but so much fighting and settling in had to be done, that it was well that the education could be given into the hands of those who had nothing to do but to attend for a certain time of the year at the Tabernacle, and to administer justice. The Priests and Levites became the natural educators of the people, and so from the first there was in Israel the beginning of a national education.	3. Explain that 'concord' means having one heart; this largely depends on having one mind, and this on education. Illustrate by the well-known fact that for many hundreds of years the education in England was in the hands of the clergy and the monks.
4. How provided. By the people. They all paid for these great privileges by giving cities to the Levites to live in, and by tithes and offerings, which were collected for their maintenance.	4. Illustrate by pointing out that we have the same principle in force to-day in tithes and offerings and in the endowments of parishes.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Unity, Peace, and Concord.

1. *Unity gained by a common worship.*

   One Tabernacle—one Priesthood—and one Common Worship.

   So one Lord—one Ministry (Bishops, Priests, and Deacons),
   and
   One Book of Common Prayer.

2. *Peace gained by uniform laws.*

   Six Cities of Refuge from Injustice—
   West-Kedesh, Shechem, Hebron,
   East-Bezer, Ramoth-Gilead, Golan.

   In Israel Moses, instructed by God, gave fundamental laws; in England Parliament, for which prayers are daily offered, makes laws.

   So in England every city a refuge from injustice (Courts — Magistrates — Police):—
   'Prosper all their consultations, that Peace and Happiness may be established among us.'

3. *Concord gained by uniform education.*

   In Israel education in the hands of one tribe, in England in the hands of one Department of the State.

   'Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established.'

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO CHAPTER XX

The Sanctuary Knocker at Durham Cathedral.

On the north door of the Cathedral is still to be seen a great knocker, which was used, even till the time of James I., by those who claimed sanctuary in the church. Originally the privilege of sanctuary 'was intended for the protection of those who had committed an involuntary crime, but in time the immunity was extended to all sorts of criminals who claimed it. Any man who stood in fear of the vengeance of the Law, or of the avenger of blood, came to the north door of the church and knocked. In a chamber above the door, removed only about the beginning of the present century, men lay in readiness to admit the fugitive at any hour of the day or night. The Galilee bell was immediately tolled to give notice that one had taken sanctuary. The criminal had to make a declaration of the nature of his offence before witnesses, and then he was provided with a black gown, with St. Cuthbert's cross in yellow cloth sewed on the left shoulder. After this he was safe under the protection of the church while he remained within its precincts. He was permitted to remain a certain time until he either made satisfaction for his offence, or obtained pardon, or abjured the country' (Low's *Historical Scenes in Durham Cathedral*, p. 33).

CHAPTER XXII. 9-34

AND the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan, to go unto the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof they were possessed, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses. 10. And when they came unto the [1] borders of

[1] region about Jordan that is.

1-9. **And the children of Reuben.** The two tribes and a half who had their home on the east of Jordan did not return immediately after the conquest of the land. They remained to take their part in its settlement amongst the tribes, and waited till Joshua should dismiss them. Before doing so he calls them together to address them. In his exhortation (see verses 1-9) he lays stress on the necessity of obedience to the Law, because from their situation far from Shiloh and Jerusalem they would often be exposed to the temptation to stay at home and not repair to the Tabernacle or Temple at the three great festivals, and so lose the faith and devotion of their fathers.

9. **Shiloh.** See notes on Josh. xviii. 1.

10. **Unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan.** These words make it quite clear that the returning tribes set up the 'great altar' on the west, and not on the east of Jordan. We might have expected the latter, and the remaining tribes evidently believed that it had been erected on the east. They thought, as we might have done, that the object of building the altar was the establishment of another sanctuary as a rival to that of Shiloh. But the two and a half tribes had no such purpose. Before they crossed over Jordan they desired to express their interest, and in a sense their joint proprietorship in the settlement of the west by building a memorial. They had helped to conquer the land, had taken their share of the difficulties and trials involved in it; and as the other tribes had not marked their work in any way, they determined to mark it for themselves and posterity. The fact that it was on the west was quite sufficient to show that they had no intention of erecting a rival sanctuary.

A great altar to see to. It is worth noting that this altar, only mentioned in this place, has been discovered by Lieutenant Conder. In

Jordan, that *are* in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

11. And the children of Israel heard say, Behold, the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar [2] over against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the passage of the children of Israel. 12. And when the children of Israel heard *of it,* the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together *at* Shiloh, to go up to war against them. 13. And the children of Israel sent unto the

[2] in the forefront of the land of Canaan, in the region about Jordan, on the side that pertaineth to the children of Israel.

the valley of the Jordan on the line of march from Shiloh to Gilead there is 'an almost inaccessible mountain (except from the north), and on its summit has been found a huge monument of masonry bearing traces of fire on its upper surface.' The fact that the approach from the north is still named 'the going up to Ed,' *i.e.* to the Witness, together with its position, seems a decisive proof that this slab of masonry is that of the altar referred to in the text.

11. **Over against . . . Canaan.** Note the Revised Version, 'An altar in the forefront of the land of Canaan, in the region about Jordan, *on the side that pertaineth to the children of Israel.*' From this it is clear that the first report that reached the camp led Israel to believe that the altar was built on the west. But the speech of Phinehas (see ver. 19) clearly implies that he thought it was on the east. This doubtless was the interpretation put on the first rumour. 'Why should Reuben and Gad erect an altar on the west; no, it was quite plain what their purpose was, and that to set up a rival tabernacle on the east where doubtless the altar was built.' Investigation would have set the matter right, but Phinehas was too sure of being right to investigate.

12. **Gathered themselves together . . . to go up to war.** This was the first step taken; and it clearly shows that even Joshua, without whose sanction such a mustering of forces was impossible, failed to interpret their action rightly.

13, 14. **Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and with him ten princes.** Having shown their determination to put down idolatry or schism by force of arms if necessary, they send a deputation to make the necessary investigation. Foremost in this delegation is Phinehas, who had borne such a conspicuous part in vindicating the purity of God's Name when many fell away to Baal-Peor (cf. Num. xxv. 10-15). The 'ten princes' who went with Eleazar were men of great importance, each being a prince of a father's house among the thousands of Israel. They were not likely to decide hastily.

children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, 14. And with him ten princes, of each chief house a prince throughout all the tribes of Israel; and each one *was* a head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel. 15. And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, and they spake with them, saying, 16. Thus saith the whole congregation of the LORD, What trespass *is* this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away *this* day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel *this* day against the LORD? 17. [a] *Is* the iniquity of Peor *too* little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD, 18. But that ye must turn away *this* day from following the LORD? and it will be, *seeing* ye rebel to-day against the LORD, that to-morrow he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel. 19. Notwithstanding, if the land of your possession *be* unclean, *then* pass ye over unto the land of the possession of the LORD, wherein the LORD'S tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us: but rebel not against the LORD, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar beside the altar of the LORD our God. 20. [b] Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the [3] accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity.

[a] Num. xxv. 4.

[b] ch. vii. 1, 5.

[3] devoted.

16. **Thus saith the whole congregation.** Phinehas and the princes were instructed to speak for all Israel. From his speech it seems clear that he thought that the altar had been built on the east of Jordan; and that whilst he recognised the natural desire of the Eastern tribes to have the purifying Presence of God in their land, yet if this could only be obtained at the expense of a rival altar and sanctuary, they had better give up their possessions in the east and come and dwell in the west. Peor, not far off, would remind them of the awful consequences of idolatry; and if it were asked what concern had Israel in their doings, the punishment that was inflicted on all Israel when Achan sinned was a sufficient answer.

21. Then the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh answered, and said unto the heads of the thousands of Israel, 22. The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if *it be* in rebellion, or if in transgression against the LORD, (save us not this day,) 23. That we have built us an altar to turn from following the LORD; or if to offer thereon burnt offering or [4] meat offering, or if to offer peace offerings thereon, let the LORD himself require it; 24. and if we have not *rather* [5] done it for fear of *this* thing, saying, In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What have you to do with the LORD God of Israel; 25. For the LORD hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad: ye have no [6] part in the LORD: so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the LORD: 26. Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt offering, nor for sacrifice: 27. But [7] *that* it *may be* a [c] witness between us and you, and [8] our generations after us, that *we* might do the service of the LORD before him with our burnt offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no [6] part in the LORD.

[4] meal.

[5] out of carefulness done this, and of purpose.

[6] portion.

[7] it shall be.

[c] Gen. xxxi. 14. ch. xxiv. 27.

[8] between our.

21. **Then the children of Reuben.** Note here the solemnity given to their protestation of innocence by the repeated invocation of God—by His three names, El, Elohim, and Jehovah. Their answer was not recriminatory or reproachful. They simply and quietly repudiate the false accusation and explain the real motives for their conduct. The altar was not for sacrifice or burnt offering; nay, so far were they from the thought of a rival worship, that their purpose in erecting it was the very opposite. It was to be a testimony that they had a share in the life and worship of their brethren in the west.

25. **Ye have no part in the Lord.** This was their fear that owing to their separation from their brethren by the Jordan it might be urged that they had no part in the Lord, *i.e.* that they were excommunicate, and must make other arrangements for worship and sacrifice than those appointed by God.

28. Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should *so* say to us or to our generations in time to come, that we may say *again*, Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt offerings, nor for sacrifices; but it *is* a witness between us and you. 29. God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn *this* day from following the LORD, to build an altar for burnt offerings, for [4] meat offerings, or for sacrifices, besides the altar of the LORD our God that *is* before his tabernacle.

30. And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation and heads of the thousands of Israel which *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben and the children of Gad and the children of Manasseh spake, it pleased them. 31. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest said unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manasseh, *This* day we perceive that the LORD *is* among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the LORD: now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD. 32. And Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, and brought them word again. 33. And the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel blessed God,

28. **The pattern of the altar.** The very shape of the altar showed that it was not for use, but only a memorial.

29. **For burnt offerings . . . for sacrifices.** This is thrice repeated, showing how keenly the Eastern tribes felt the accusation of their setting up a rival worship.

31. **The Lord is among us.** This speech is remarkable. Phinehas does not fear the horrors of civil war, terrible as they would have been, so much as the absence of God from amongst them. A sin committed by a part of the people might mean, as it did in the case of Achan, their abandonment by God and the judgment that would necessarily follow. The righteousness of the two tribes and a half had delivered the whole people not merely out of the perils of civil war, but 'out of the hand of the Lord.'

[9] spake no more of going up against them to war.

[10] they said it is.

and [9] did not intend to go up against them in battle, to destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt. 34. And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar *Ed:* for [10] it *shall be* a witness between us that the LORD *is* God.

34. **Called the altar Ed.** As is seen by the word 'Ed' being in italics, it has no place in the original Hebrew. The passage should probably run, 'The children of Reuben and the children of Gad named the altar that, as they said, it may be a witness between us that the Lord is God.' The Revised Version, however, makes scarcely any change, and the sense is well expressed in the words as they stand.

LESSON XIX

Misunderstanding

INTRODUCTION.—Refer to last lesson, and ask what was the object of distributing the Priests and Levites throughout Israel. Note what our Collect says, 'God is the Author of Peace and Lover of Concord,' and therefore He makes the best possible provisions for both, but these often rendered ineffectual by man's discord. To-day we think of one of the most fruitful causes of discord—misunderstanding. Sometimes boys and girls who have been friends for years get apart, won't speak. What has happened? Misunderstanding. Some one has said or done something quite innocent in itself, but which has been misunderstood. We shall see a case of this kind to-day, and how its evil consequences were prevented.

MATTER.

1. **How it arose.**

The two tribes and a half dismissed with God's blessing to their lands. They feel leaving the camp, their brethren, the Captain, and especially the Tabernacle services. When they are gone they will be forgotten; and perhaps when the Captain is dead and another generation takes their place, their children will be forbidden the worship of God and treated like heathen. The river Jordan which they must cross a great divider. Had they not better make it clear before they pass over that they have as much right in the Tabernacle, though

METHOD.

1. Point out clearly where the lands of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh were, and how they obtained them.

Show that misunderstanding generally arises through sensitiveness about our own rights, and want of confidence in our friend's respect for them. So the boy, kept at home by illness, insists on some proof that his place in the field shall be kept open for him; the girl leaving for school puts up some little barrier round her garden that it may not be invaded by her brothers or sisters. This distrust doubly bad if not explained.

LESSON XIX—*continued.* MISUNDERSTANDING

MATTER.	METHOD.
they do dwell in the east, as their brethren in the west? But how? Make a great monument which will be for ever a witness to their own share in all national rights. This monument placed in the west will, as it were, always speak for them. So they gladly build 'a great altar to see to,' but send no explanation.	
2. Its consequences. Israel, astonished when they hear what has been done, cannot understand what it means—an altar in the west! No, it must be on the east, and the purpose evidently is to erect a rival sanctuary. This must be stopped. Remember what happened at Peor when a new worship was set up—24,000 people died (Num. xxv.); and what happened when Achan disobeyed God's command—all the people suffered. The sin of the two tribes and a half would be visited on all the people. All Israel would be punished if they allowed it. They must prevent it by force of arms if necessary. Picture the excitement as messages are sent to the tribes saying what has been done, also Joshua's anxiety at the thought of civil war.	2. Show that distrust leads to misinterpretation. Any selfish act excites criticism, and criticism often unfair. The action of the boy or girl is twisted to mean something never intended, and then hard words are used. Point out clearly that the fault was on both sides; the eastern tribes ought to have shown more confidence, and sent full explanation of what they had done; and those on the west ought to have investigated the report as it first came to them, and have put the best, and not the worst, interpretation upon it. Illustrate by our Lord's teaching (S. Matt. xviii. 15). The first step is to be taken by the one offended against, who is to try and win his brother by telling him his fault.
3. How it was removed. Fortunately, after the first heat of passion, calmer thoughts prevail. Before going to battle they will appoint a commission of inquiry. Note how carefully the members are selected. Princes or heads of houses, *i.e.* men of age and experience, who would be cautious; and as their president, Phinehas, whose zeal for God's worship had been so conspicuously shown (Num. xxv. 7). Note the mistake they made in crossing over to Gilead without first seeing where the altar was;	3. Illustrate by the proverb, 'A soft answer turneth away wrath'; much better instead of firing up when accused of shocking things to show that they are impossible. Don't forget the delightful ending to the quarrel. Phinehas commending the east tribes, and all blessing God for the escape from Divine judgment.

LESSON XIX—*continued.* MISUNDERSTANDING

MATTER.

its pattern and its position would at once have removed all false impressions. Contrast the lofty tone of the commission with the quiet humble reply of the accused. Phinehas assumes that the sin has been committed, though he has no proof of it. Fortunately Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh have no wish to retaliate, but content themselves by showing that their purpose was to do the very opposite of that for which they were accused.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Misunderstanding.

'A soft answer turneth away wrath.'—Prov. xv. 1.

1. *Cause.*
   The great altar. Built to protect rights. Misinterpreted. Easier to believe bad motives than good. 'The words of a talebearer are as dainty morsels.'
2. *Consequences.*
   Excitement at Shiloh. The commission appointed—goes to Gilead instead of the borders of Jordan — consequent misunderstanding. 'The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water.'
3. *Removal.*
   Hard words of Phinehas—gentle answer of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh. 'He that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.'
4. *Results.*
   Great joy — new name given to the altar—Moral Victory for the Eastern tribes.

CHAPTER XXIII. 1-16

AND it came to pass a long time after that the LORD had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, [1] that Joshua waxed old *and* stricken in age. 2. And Joshua called for all Israel, *and* for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old *and* stricken in age: 3. And ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for [a] the LORD your God *is* he that hath fought for you. 4. Behold, I have divided unto you *by lot* these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even *unto* the great sea westward. 5. And the LORD your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the LORD your God [2] hath promised unto you. 6. Be ye therefore very courageous to

1 and Joshua was old . . .; that Joshua.

a Ex. xiv. 24.

2 spake.

1. **Joshua waxed old.** He was over a hundred years old, and wished to give a solemn warning to his people before he died. Like S. Paul with the Ephesian elders, he first calls for the chiefs and addresses them, and then gives a charge to the whole people.

2. **Called for all Israel, and for their elders.** As will be seen, the word '*and*' is not in the text. All Israel on this occasion was represented by the heads of the tribes, families, and houses, besides the judges and officers. It was official Israel that Joshua now addressed.

3. **Ye have seen.** They had the great advantage of being eyewitnesses of such great acts as the dividing of the waters of the Jordan, the overthrow of Jericho, the victory at Gibeon, etc., and of knowing from personal experience that it was only by God's supernatural aid that they had conquered.

5. **He shall expel them.** What God had done in the past He would do in the future if they would but remain faithful.

6. **Be ye therefore very courageous.** It is not physical, but moral courage to which Joshua is urging them—courage to remain separate from the people amongst whom they dwelt, to avoid mixed marriages and idolatry. It would have been much easier to be friendly and sociable instead of stiff and unsociable, but to do this would be to fall away from God. They were not firm enough in their own faith to become missionaries, their duty was to show their faith by a stern unbending attitude to all idolaters.

keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of
[b] Deut. v. 32, and xxviii. 14. Moses, [b] that *ye* turn not aside therefrom *to* the right hand
or *to* the left; 7. That *ye* come not among these nations,
[c] Ps. xvi. 4. these that remain among you; neither [c] make mention of
the name of their gods, nor cause to swear *by them*, neither
serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them: 8. But cleave
unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this
day. 9. For the LORD hath driven out from before you
great nations and strong: but *as for* you, no man hath
[3] stood. [3] *been able to* stand before you unto this day. 10. [d] One
[d] Lev. xxvi. 8; Deut. xxxii. 30. man of you shall chase a thousand: for the LORD your
God, he *it is* that fighteth for you, as he [2] hath promised you.
11. Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye
love the LORD your God. 12. Else if ye do in any wise go
back, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, *even*
these that remain among you, and shall make marriages
with them, and go in unto them, and they to you: 13.
Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more
[e] Ex. xxiii. 33; Num. xxxiii. 55; Deut. vii. 16. drive out *any of* these nations from before you; [e] but they
shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your
sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this
good land which the LORD your God hath given you. 14.
And behold, *this* day I am going the way of all the earth:

7. Neither make mention, etc. Four degrees of sinful idolatry are here named—(1) Speaking of false gods in conversation; (2) swearing by them; (3) serving them by acts of obedience; (4) worshipping them by bowing down to them. The first, Joshua felt, was likely to lead to the last.

9. The Lord hath driven out from before you great nations. The contrast between the heathen nations and Israel was most marked. Great and strong though they were, they fell; and weak though Israel was, yet she was always, when faithful, victorious. Joshua and those whom he addressed had seen thousands of the enemy fleeing before a small body of Israelites.

13. Snares and traps unto you. The awful danger of fellowship with these heathen idolaters could not be more strongly expressed. They would lead them into the bondage of sin, cause them the like pain to scourging, and blind them so that they would be unable to see the path they ought to walk in.

and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that
f not one thing hath failed of all the good things which *f* ch. xxi. 45.
the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to
pass unto you, *and* not one thing hath failed thereof. 15.
[4] Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are [4] And.
come upon you, [5] which the LORD your God [2] promised [5] of.
you; so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things,
until he have destroyed you from off this good land which
the LORD your God hath given you. 16. When ye [6] have [6] transgress.
transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which
he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods,
and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the
LORD be kindled against you, and ye shall perish quickly
from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

15. **As all good things are come upon you.** God had kept every promise of blessing He had made, and He would keep every threat of punishment. They must not suppose that He was weak, like a good natured man who will never inflict on himself the pain of punishing. His justice is as strong as His love. It is evident from the whole tone of the address that Joshua, like S. Paul in his farewell to the elders of Ephesus, fears that great defection will follow his death. The warning note is the characteristic one throughout.

LESSON XX

A Warning against Bad Company

INTRODUCTION.—Refer to the last Lesson. Why misunderstanding so distressing? Because it would lead to divisions amongst themselves. They must keep together in order that they might not be led to seek false friends. Explain the text, 'Evil company doth corrupt good manners' (1 Cor. xv. 33), and show that when boys or girls get lonely, they are so anxious to get friends that they forget the danger that they may run into. It was this danger that made Joshua anxious when the different tribes had separated and gone to their own districts. So just before his death he calls for the representatives of all the tribes, together with the judges and officers, to warn them against yielding to this temptation to which they will be exposed. We shall notice—(1) What the danger was; (2) the certain results; (3) how it was to be provided against.

LESSON XX—*continued.* A WARNING AGAINST BAD COMPANY

MATTER.

1. The Temptation.

The land not depopulated—thousands of heathen still remained in possession of their fenced cities—but all were frightened of Israel, and therefore subject to them. They were idolaters, very cruel and very immoral, and yet very artful. They had heard how Moab had for a time overcome Israel by false offers of friendship, so they wished to try the same plan. They would not fight them openly, but secretly. They would propose advantageous terms of peace, offer them good opportunities for trading, then try to make marriages with them. All this very tempting to weak tribes without a strong leader like Joshua, tribes that wanted to give up fighting and have an easy time. At Shiloh, with all the help of the Tabernacle services, the instruction, and many friends, this would not be felt; but away from the central home, the temptation was strong.

2. The Warning.

Joshua, seeing all this, speaks very plainly—(*a*) These false friends would be *snares and traps, i.e.* they would turn out to be very different from what was expected; and once caught by them, it would be difficult to shake off their companionship. They would be in bondage like a bird caught in a trap. (*b*) *They would be scourges in their sides.* Directly they had hold of them, they would prove to be perpetual sources of grief and pain. So the men of Sodom were to Lot. So Joab was to David. (*c*) They would be *thorns in their eyes*—not only giving sharp pain, but preventing their seeing. They would be unable to distinguish between right and wrong, moral distinctions would be confused.

METHOD.

1. Here point out that though England is a Christian country, and her schools are Christian, yet not every one is a disciple of Christ, and boys and girls must be on their guard against those who would try to get them away from their Leader, Christ. This danger greater when they have left home, which is often like Shiloh, a place of peace and protection.

Show that the danger of bad company lies in being at first pleasant and attractive. It is always recognised by its godlessness.

2. (*a*) The great danger of bad company lies in the way in which it sticks to those who resort to it.

(*b*) A godless boy soon shows himself to be both a tyrant and a bully, robbing his friends of money and reputation.

(*c*) Things that once seemed clearly wrong become, through the arguments of the wicked, permissible. 'I didn't see any harm in it,' is a constant remark of those seduced by evil.

LESSON XX—*continued.* A WARNING AGAINST BAD COMPANY

MATTER.

3. How to guard against it.

'Be thou very courageous.' The one virtue Joshua recommends is that which was impressed upon him when he became leader, and that 'moral courage.' Courage to stand alone if need be, to be loyal to God at all costs. But this courage is God-given, and is fed by the Word of God. It is observance of and obedience to the Word of God which makes a man courageous. So note, Joshua lays great stress on their 'keeping and doing' what God bade them in the Law. Again, courage to do the right thing is stimulated by fear of doing the wrong thing. Note how Joshua tells them that if they yield to bad company, they will certainly perish. The same judgment will fall on them as they had seen with their own eyes fall on the heathen. God is just, as well as loving; and whilst He will give abundant help to the loyal and faithful, He will leave the sinners to their own way.

METHOD.

3. Quote—

'Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone,
Dare to have a purpose firm,
Dare to make it known.'

'A heart unspotted is not easily daunted.'
— *Shakespeare.*

Quote—'Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.'

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

A Warning against Bad Company.

'Evil company doth corrupt good manners.'—1 Cor. xv. 33.

1. *The Temptation.* Israel surrounded by the heathen; Christians by the world.
   'He showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time' (S. Luke iv. 5).
   'My godfathers and godmothers did promise that I should renounce the pomps and vanity of this wicked world.'
2. *The Warning.* 'A companion of fools shall be destroyed' (Prov. xiii. 20).
   Bad company a snare, a whip, a pain blinding the eyes.
   'The friendship of the world is enmity with God' (James iv. 4).
3. *The Remedy.* Moral courage.
   'Be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the Book.'

   'Dare to be a Daniel,
   Dare to stand alone,
   Dare to have a purpose firm,
   Dare to make it known.'
4. *The Example.* 'Ye shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me' (S. John xvi. 32).

CHAPTER XXIV. 1-27

AND Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God. 2. And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, [a] Your fathers dwelt [1] on the *other* side of the flood in old time, *even* Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods. 3. And I took your father Abraham from [1] the *other* side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan,

[a] Gen. xi. 31; Judith v. 6, 7.
[1] beyond the river.

1. **To Shechem.** Why to Shechem, and not to Shiloh, where the Tabernacle was? The answer is found in the purpose of the gathering—the renewal of the covenant. It was at Shechem that the people had met to hear the blessings and cursings recited; here then was the most fitting place to put before the people the great choice as to whether they would take God for their Sovereign or not. But not only this, Shechem was, with the exception of Hebron, the most impressive place in Palestine. Here it was 'that Jacob their great ancestor had solemnly sanctified his house unto the service of God, giving the selfsame directions which Joshua now, following the very words of the Patriarch, repeats (cf. verses 23 and 26 with Gen. xxxv. 1-4), and here that the bones of Joseph and his brethren were (verse 32; Acts vii. 16) to be laid to rest, as an acknowledgment that the promises of God to the Patriarchs had now by the hand of Joshua been fulfilled.'

They presented themselves before God. Not before the Tabernacle, which was at Shiloh, but before the Presence of God vouchsafed to the old altar of unhewn stones which by His command had been erected many years before when they last met (Josh. viii. 31).

2. **All the people.** The proposal that Joshua is now about to make is not made simply to the representatives—the chiefs and leaders—but to 'all the people.' The whole nation, with the exception of those who could not be spared from their homes, is assembled at Shechem.

3. **I took your father Abraham.** It should be noted at the outset that Joshua's address to the people is directed against idolatry. They were to choose that day whether they would serve Jehovah or the false gods. It is therefore important to show that their whole history is a witness against idolatry and for God. Their great ancestor, the founder of the nation, was brought to the Land of Promise, in which they now dwelt, that he might be free from temptation to idolatry. God had brought him a long way, even from the other side of the Euphrates, that He might educate him in the knowledge of the one true God.

and multiplied his seed, and [b] gave him Isaac. 4. And I gave unto Isaac [c] Jacob and [d] Esau: and I gave unto Esau mount Seir, to possess it, [e] but Jacob and his children went down *into* Egypt. 5. [f] I sent Moses also and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to *that* which I did amongst them: and afterward I brought you out. 6. [g] And I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and you came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen *unto* [h] the Red sea. 7. And when they cried unto the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season. 8. And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the *other* side Jordan; [i] and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you. 9. Then Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and [k] sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you: 10. But I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you

[b] Gen. xxi. 2.
[c] Gen. xxv. 26.
[d] Gen. xxxvi. 8.
[e] Gen. xlvi. 6.
[f] Ex. iii. 10.
[g] Ex. xii. 37.
[h] Ex. xiv. 9.
[i] Num. xxi. 33.
[k] Num. xxi. 5; Deut. xxiii. 4.

3. **And gave him Isaac.** Isaac was a gift in a further sense than that spoken of by the Psalmist of all children as 'a gift and heritage that cometh of the Lord,' for his father was a hundred years old, and his body as good as dead (Rom. iv. 19). So too Jacob, for Isaac and Rebekah had been childless for nineteen years.

6. **And I brought your fathers out of Egypt.** Joshua here notices the second great deliverance from idolatry.

7. **He put darkness.** Joshua notices as one of the chief causes of the destruction of the Egyptians the supernatural darkness which prevented their seeing the incoming of the tidal waves that engulphed them.

8. **I gave them into your hand.** Here again was a deliverance from idolatry by the special hand of God.

10. **I would not hearken unto Balaam.** From this it would appear that Balaam was only prevented by Divine interposition from cursing Israel. His wish to curse them is here spoken of as a prayer which God refused to hear. It should be noted how keenly Joshua and Israel felt Balaam's interference. It is here recognised as an evil great enough to be compared with the power of the Amorites or of Egypt. This was a third deliverance, as that from the seven nations was the fourth.

out of his hand. 11. And ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand. 12. [l] And I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, *even* the two kings of the Amorites; [2] *but* not with thy sword, nor with thy bow. 13. And I have given you a land [3] for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat. 14. Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served [1] on the *other* side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. 15. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you *this* day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* [1] on the *other* side of the flood, or

[l] Ex. xxiii. 28; Deut. vii. 20.

[2] *omit* but.

[3] whereon thou hadst not laboured.

12. **I sent the hornet.** In accordance with the promise of Ex. xxiii. 28. A question has arisen whether we are to take the word literally and explain it as meaning that a plague of hornets so infested the land of the Amorites that the inhabitants were obliged to flee before it, or whether it is a metaphor for consternation. The latter is the more usual interpretation, on the ground that we do not read elsewhere of any such intervention as that of hornets, and that a similar metaphor is used of the Amorites themselves, who are said 'to have chased Israel as bees do.' These reasons do not seem sufficient. In the last case the metaphor is plain, and the fact that the intervention is singular is no sufficient reason for its not having happened. The hornets, the sting of which is very painful, would inflict more damage than the lice which plagued Egypt; and if they were in great numbers, might cause people to leave their cities. The author of Wisdom xii. 8-10 takes the passage literally. Another explanation gives the word 'hornet' as the name of a tribe. In any case, the truth here taught is that some special agency was employed which caused the Amorites to leave their land.

14. **Put away the gods.** It is strange, and yet these words seem to leave no doubt as to the fact that in spite of God's miraculous interpositions in their behalf, there were idolaters in Israel, men secretly worshipping Egyptian and Chaldee deities in the form of images. Their service of Jehovah was therefore unreal, and Joshua urges them to be true, to do one thing or the other, but not to try to serve both Jehovah and foreign gods.

the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

16. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods; 17. For the LORD our God, he *it is* that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed: 18. And the LORD drave out from before us all the [4] people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: *therefore* will we also serve the LORD; for he *is* our God. 19. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he *is* a holy God; he *is* a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. 20. If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, [m] then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good. 21. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD. 22. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye *are* witnesses

[4] peoples.

[m] ch. xxiii. 15.

16. And the people answered and said. The address by their old leader made a great impression. The people recognise that what he has said is true—they will then serve the Lord because He has shown Himself to be their God.

19. Ye cannot serve the Lord. It is strange that after inviting them to serve God that he should say, 'Ye cannot serve the Lord'; but his invitation was coupled with the appeal to put away the strange gods. Of this they said nothing in their reply. So he reminds them that God is both holy and jealous; His holiness demands purity, and therefore separation from all unlawful worship; and His jealousy demands singleheartedness, the removal of all rivals. They must not think that because He has been so kind to them that He cannot be anything else, that His justice will always be obscured by His mercy.

21. Nay; but we will. In spite of the warning, the promise goes up in a great shout, 'We will serve the Lord.'

22. Ye are witnesses against yourselves. Is Joshua here pointing to the fact that their words witness against their actions; that he knows that many of them are secretly idolaters; or simply that 'in the event of their falling away, they would condemn themselves by their own evidence, and would be obliged to admit that Jehovah had a right to punish them'? We are inclined to the former view, especially in the light of the words that follow, 'Now *therefore* put away the strange gods.'

against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, *We are* witnesses. 23. Now therefore put away, *said he*, the strange gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel. 24. And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey. 25. So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

26. And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the

24. **The Lord our God will we serve.** Again there is no resolution to put away idolatry, but Joshua is obliged to be content with the promise of loyalty.

25. **So Joshua made a covenant.** Doubtless in the same way that Moses had made it on Sinai, with sacrifices—the sprinkling of blood and the reading of the Law (see Exod. xxiv.). Read also of the renewal of the covenant on the field of Moab (Deut. xxix.).

And set them a statute and an ordinance. He drew up for them some special laws and regulations for their guidance in morals and the worship of God, and these he wrote in the Book of the Law.

26. **And took a great stone.** As a memorial of the solemn covenant that had just been made, Joshua set up a great stone pillar, placing it under the famous oak where Abraham had rested and built an altar in commemoration of God's kindness, and where Jacob had buried and hidden the strange gods that his household had brought out of Mesopotamia. If this were known—and doubtless it was—it would give great point to Joshua's sermon. As Jacob, on returning to the Land of Promise, had sanctified his whole household by putting away the strange gods, so Joshua would sanctify his great household by putting away every kind of idolatry. The place urged them to the same spirit of consecration.

That was by the sanctuary of the Lord. The place was a sanctuary, for it had been consecrated many, many years ago by the prayers and sacrifices of the ancestors of those now gathered together. It is quite likely that both the altar and oak were still standing, and the Israelites could hardly fail to be impressed by the strange fulfilment of God's promises. Four hundred years ago or more a lonely man with his wife and nephew stood there with a strange feeling of homesickness, wondering why they had left their friends, and what the purpose of the Lord was. Then came the promise that to him and his seed the land should be given. Now the promise, working its way in a wonderful manner, had been fulfilled, and the seed, numbering at least two millions, were in possession of the land.

27. **This stone shall be a witness.** As the oak, and possibly the altar, were a witness to the loyalty of Abraham and the faith of Jacob, so the stone should be a witness to the promise of Israel freely given amidst every circumstance that might add impressiveness to a place which for four hundred years at least had been a sanctuary of the Lord.

law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there
5 the. under [5]an oak, that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD.
27. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone
6 against. shall be a witness [6]unto us; for it hath heard all the words
of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore
a witness [6]unto you, lest ye deny your God.

LESSON XXI

A Great Choice and what it involves

INTRODUCTION.—About what was our last Lesson? Avoiding what? To-day we will think of choosing, and choosing a good Friend and kind Master. Show how we are often called upon to make a choice—what we shall wear—what we shall eat or drink—what we shall buy—but no choice so important as that of those who are to be our friends, except the choice of a master or mistress. Show how much depends on the latter, and then lead on from earthly friends and masters to the one Master—the one Friend that sticketh closer than a brother (S. John xiii. 13; S. Matt. vi. 24; Prov. xviii. 24). One day we shall be called upon to make such a public open choice. Interesting, then, to learn what Israel did when such a choice was proposed to them. We shall note—(1) The Circumstances; (2) The Address; (3) The Question and Answer; (4) The Witness; (5) The Sealing.

MATTER.

1. The Circumstances.

Everything depended on the choice which the people were about to make, so Joshua takes care to put it to them in a place which would help them to decide rightly. This place, some distance from Shiloh, but where they had been before (refer here to the lesson on 'How to take Success'), where Jacob had been (here quote what he had done there), and where Abraham had been (here show what God had promised him then). The choice then made had turned out to be so wise, would it not be well to choose in the same way?

METHOD.

1. Picture Shechem as clearly as possible, showing the oak and the altar where Abraham and Jacob had worshipped. After making the actual circumstances clear, apply by picturing the possible circumstances of the Confirmation to which some of those taught will be looking forward—the church where their parents, and possibly grandparents made their choice—'the cloud of witnesses.'

LESSON XXI—*continued.* A GREAT CHOICE AND WHAT IT INVOLVES

MATTER.	METHOD.
2. The Address. Before putting the question, Joshua makes an address. He shows what a good Friend God had been to Israel, delivering Abraham out of idolatry, Israel out of Egypt, and the hand of the Amorites, from Balaam and the seven nations, and planting them in a good land where they need fear nothing if only they are faithful.	2. Apply by referring to the address which the Bishop generally makes before putting the question, and show how many more illustrations of God's love we have than Joshua had. The Birth, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of our Lord, God's great Gift to us in the Holy Ghost.
3. The Question and Answer. Note particularly the form of the question—'If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord?' How could it seem evil? Because that service implied 'putting away' idolatry. The choice demanded a sacrifice of that which they liked and wanted to keep. In the answer no notice is taken of the implied condition of service. Its omission leads Joshua to say, 'Ye cannot serve the Lord, for He is holy and jealous.' His holiness demanded purity; His jealousy, loyalty. In spite of this, the people determine to choose the Lord, and therefore pledged themselves to both.	3. Apply by referring to the Bishop's question, which asks for a promise to renounce 'the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh,' as well as to believe and obey. Choosing God implies giving up (see S. Luke xiv. 26).
4. The Witness. There was a threefold witness—(1) The people were witnesses of what they had promised; (2) the stone set up by Joshua was a witness; (3) Joshua's written record of what had taken place was a witness that they had of their own mind and will chosen Jehovah for their God. It was the voluntary spirit of the act which was so important. Again and again the stone must have spoken of the loyal obedience so freely promised.	4. Refer in the application to the Rubric at the end of the Catechism, 'And every one shall have a godfather or a godmother as a witness of their Confirmation.' So we, too, have a threefold witness: (1) Godparents; (2) the stone font where we were baptized; and (3) the written record in our Confirmation Card.

LESSON XXI—*continued.* A GREAT CHOICE AND WHAT IT INVOLVES

MATTER.

5. The Sealing.

Show the significance of the Covenant ritual which now followed. The *sacrifice* symbolised in act what the people had promised in word. The sprinkling of the blood on the altar and the people showed that God had accepted the offering and gave it His blessing. The reading of the Law attested what God would do if the people were loyal in their faith. So in the Covenant God met His people more than halfway, and gave them strength to be and do what He wished.

METHOD.

5. Show that the choice would soon be regretted if God did not meet it more than halfway with His Gift. Explain the laying on of hands as symbolising God's blessing and the Gift of the Holy Ghost, enabling those who have made the choice to remain true. Show from Eph. i. 13 and iv. 30 that 'sealing is the word used for Confirmation.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

A Great Choice.

'Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.'

1. *The best place for choosing.*
   Shechem. (Abraham—Jacob—Consecration.)
   The Church. (Friends—font where we were baptized.)
   'Compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.'

2. *The best time.*
   Tribes now leaving Shiloh.
   Boys and girls leaving home or school.

3. *The best way.*
   Joshua's way. Address—question and answer—witnesses—covenant ritual.
   The Church's way. Bishop's address and question—candidate's answer—witnesses—font—godparents—clergyman—Apostolic ritual (laying on of hands) and Gift of the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER XXIV. 29-33

AND it came to pass after these things,[1] that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old. 30. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in [a] Timnath-serah, which *is* in [1] mount Ephraim, on the north [2] side of

[a] ch. xix. 50; Judg. ii. 9.
[1] the hill country of.
[2] of the mountain.

29. **The servant of the Lord.** A notable addition to the words 'the son of Nun.' The great characteristic of Joshua was not that he was a great leader or commander, not that he with infinite wisdom and patience settled the people in the land, but that he served the Lord. This is the estimate of the Word of God.

An hundred and ten years old. His age when he died was precisely that which Joseph, whom he resembled in the simplicity and purity of his character, reached.

30. **And they buried him in the border of his inheritance.** See Josh. xix. 49. 'When they had made an end of dividing the land for inheritance by their coasts, the children of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun among them. According to the word of the Lord, they gave him the city which he asked, even Timnath-serah in Mount Ephraim; and he built the city and dwelt therein.'

This Timnath-serah is described in Judg. ii. 9 as being in Mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash, and is 'now generally identified with Tibnah, between Jifna and El Mejdel.' 'Of all sites I have seen,' says Lieutenant Conder, 'none is so striking as that of Joshua's home, surrounded as it is with deep valleys and wild rugged hills.' As early as the time of Jerome (fourth century) it was noted by those who knew Palestine as being singular that Joshua, who might have had the pick of the land, should have chosen for himself so rough and unattractive a situation. Here he was buried, and here his tomb is shown at this day. 'It is a square chamber with five excavations in three of its sides, the central one forming a passage leading into a second chamber beyond. A great number of lamp niches cover the walls of the porch—upwards of two hundred—arranged in vertical rows. A single cavity with a niche for a lamp may be identified, it is thought, with the resting-place of the warrior chief of Israel' (Maclear). Lieutenant Conder says that it is certainly the most striking monument in the country, and strongly recommends itself to the mind as an authentic site. It should be noted, however, that other authorities think that the site is to the north-east of Lydda, and point to the tombs there, in some of which flint knives have been found. These, the Septuagint states, were buried with Joshua.

the hill of Gaash. 31. And Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.

b Gen. l. 25; Ex. xiii. 19.

32. And [b] the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in [3] a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the [c] sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of [4] silver: and [5] it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph. 33. And Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in [3] a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in [1] mount Ephraim.

3 the.
c Gen. xxxiii. 19.
4 money.
5 they.

31. **And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua.** Such was Joshua's influence, that he not only kept Israel faithful during his lifetime, but that after his death his example still remained as a power in the land.

32. **And the bones of Joseph . . . buried they in Shechem.** Joseph before he died made the children of Israel swear that they would carry his bones back to the land where he was born and brought up. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews notes it as a remarkable instance of faith (Heb. xi. 22). These bones were now buried in Shechem, in the land purchased three hundred years ago by Jacob.

33. **And Eleazar the son of Aaron died.** Because it is mentioned here, it does not follow that his death took place after that of Joshua. It is mentioned with his as showing that the old order ruled by those who had known the bondage of Egypt, the journeyings in the wilderness, was now changing, giving place to new.

They buried him in a hill. The word for hill is Gibeah, and this Gibeah was the Gibeah Phinehas, the city of his son. Dean Stanley tells us that his tomb is still shown in a little close overshadowed by venerable terebinths at Awertah, a few miles south-east of Nablus.

LESSON XXII

Joshua's Character

A good soldier of Jesus Christ

INTRODUCTION.—Begin by asking what we mean by 'character,' and explain that literally it means that which is cut or engraven, so that which marks out one thing from another. So it comes to mean that which is most marked in a man's life, that which we see again and again. Explain the phrase 'A boy of no character,' *i.e.* a boy with nothing marked about him, and therefore a good-for-nothing boy. Show also that repeated actions make character, as repeated strokes of the engraver's tool make an outline on the steel or wood. To-day we look at Joshua's character, try to find out what are the things he is continually doing or saying. We first ask, What was Joshua's profession? for this will have much to do with his character.

MATTER.

1. Courage.

Joshua a soldier. Soldiers must be brave. God expects Joshua to be brave, tells him so again and again (see i. 6, 7, 9). Explain courage is not being without fear, but conquering it. S. Paul was very brave, yet see 1 Cor. ii. 3. So Gordon very brave, and yet he said, 'For my part, I am always frightened, and very much so.' Joshua, no doubt, felt fear when he saw the huge walls of Jericho, when he marched against the five kings at Gibeon, and the confederate armies at Merom, but he never allowed it to master him, never turned to the right or the left because of it. Walled cities, chariots and cavalry, armies twice and three times as big as his own, never daunted his brave spirit. Note that bravery is a mark of God's saints—of Moses, Samuel, David, Daniel, S. Peter, S. Paul, etc. See 2 Tim. i. 7 for the source of the gift, and show that courage is not only shown in facing physical danger, but meeting and conquering difficulty.

METHOD.

1. Children should turn out the passages noted and mark the words. The teacher should then remind them that they are soldiers and fight under a flag; that many years ago they were sworn in, as it were, on the promises made by their godparents. Further, that in old days the Christian soldiers had a uniform, called the Chrisom, and that now they are marked with the Sign of the Cross to remind them that they have 'put on Christ' (Gal. iii. 27; Rom. xiii. 14), and are pledged to be loyal to Him.

LESSON XXII—*continued.* JOSHUA'S CHARACTER

MATTER.	METHOD.
2. Punctuality. This another mark of the true soldier. Note how often it is said, 'Joshua rose up early in the morning' (Josh. iii. 1, vi. 12, vi. 15, vii. 16, viii. 10). Whenever any important work had to be done, he rose up early to do it. Early rising was also characteristic of the Second Joshua, our Captain, of whom we read, 'He rose a great while before day.' So, too, Joshua's sudden attacks show the importance he laid upon being in time. Joshua's habit of early rising was the key to his character, for it enabled him to lay his plans quietly before God before he was troubled by questions or details from his officers.	2. Illustrate by Napoleon, who studied his watch as closely as his map. His victories were won by consummate strategy, but more especially by impressing his subordinates with punctuality. Manœuvring over large tracts, so that the enemy was puzzled to decide where the blow would fall, he would suddenly concentrate his forces with irresistible precision on some weak point. Of course, the successful execution of such a plan demanded every division to be at its appointed place with exact punctuality. Illustrate by Gordon, who insisted on having his quiet time for prayer undisturbed, and so placed his handkerchief outside the tent as a sign that he was busy with God.
3. Obedience. This was the basis of Joshua's character, as it is of every true soldier. He never questions any of God's commands. Whether he be asked to cross the Jordan at flood-time, or to assault Jericho without engineering appliances, or to march to the relief of an unworthy ally against powerful enemies, he obeys at once without question. This the secret of his influence over others. Always 'under authority' himself, he inspired others with confidence (see S. Luke vii. 8). Note how this reverence for authority led him on one occasion to be narrow-minded (Num. xi. 28). He could not understand irregular service.	3. 'What has your father been teaching you?' asked a friend of the child of a philosopher, thinking some great thing had been learned. 'Obedience,' was the answer.
4. Unselfishness. A true soldier thinks of his country first, his comrades second, and of himself last. So Joshua is quite content with an obscure and unimportant village as his reward.	4. Illustrate by such stories as those of David refusing to drink the water his comrades obtained at such cost, and offering it as a precious sacrifice to God. Cf. Sir P. Sidney on the field of Zutphen.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

Joshua's Character.

'A good soldier of Jesus Christ.'

1. *Must be brave.*
   Courage is conquering fear. So Joshua at Jericho—Ai—Beth-horon—Merom. So S. Paul—Gordon.
   'God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power.'
2. *Must be active.*
   Joshua rose up early before crossing Jordan, before compassing Jericho, before trying Achan, before battle of Ai.
   So of Joshua's Captain, 'He rose up a great while before day.'
3. *Must be obedient.*
   Of Joshua as well as of S. Paul, 'I was not disobedient.'
   So, too, Joshua's Captain 'learned obedience by the things which He suffered.'
4. *Must be unselfish.*
   Of Joshua it could be said, 'Though he might have become rich, yet he remained poor'; of the greater Joshua it is said, 'Though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor.'

LESSON XXIII

Joshua a Type of Jesus Christ

This Lesson will not be found very easy, but it is necessary to be taken as illustrating one of the chief examples of a not uncommon principle found in Scripture, namely, that of types. The word 'type' should be first carefully explained. It means (1) a mark left by a blow—so S. John tells us that in our Lord's risen body were 'the types, *i.e.* the marks of the nails'; then (2) a figure formed by a blow or by moulding—so a printing type, *i.e.* a block of metal bearing on its upper surface, usually in relief, a letter or character; then (3) metaphorically it is used of things or persons as being examples or illustrations, *e.g.* the punishments that happened to Israel were types or illustrations of what would happen to Christians if unfaithful (1 Cor. x. 16); and Adam was a type or illustration in certain particulars of Him that was to come

(Rom. v. 14). So in the same way Joshua was an illustration of Christ. His name, work, and actions were in many respects illustrative of Christ's name, work, and actions. Do we ask why? In order that Israel might be constantly reminded by example as well as by precept of the work of their great expected Deliverer. As they were led to believe that their Messiah would be a Joshua, *i.e.* a Saviour, they would look with special interest to the first who bore that name, and say to themselves, 'When Messiah comes, He will be like the first great deliverer.' And when He did come, and Christians looked back to see whether there was any resemblance between the first and second Joshua, they were struck with the number of points of likeness, and so were led to have their faith strengthened by the thought that, fifteen hundred years before Christ came, there were pictures of Him marking those features that were chiefly important. But it may be asked, How can a man be a picture of Christ without interference with his freedom? In the first place, we must remember that every man is intended to be a type or picture of Christ. His individuality, which is unlike that of any one else, is a type or pattern of a feature found in perfection only in Christ. Note that Christ is not a man, but Man, that is, He has a universal character, and in it the model of every good character that has been, and is, or will be, in the world. And the more entirely man submits himself to Christ's will, the more remarkable becomes the likeness. He can and ought to show one feature of Christ as plainly as though it were described in a book. So S. Paul tells his Corinthian converts that 'they are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ' (2 Cor. iii. 3). There is nothing strange or fanciful, then, in men being types of Christ. Now Joshua, as we have seen, was singularly submissive to God's will in every particular. We shall therefore expect to find that in that particular in which his individuality is most clearly seen, *i.e.* in leadership, he will exhibit some striking likenesses to Christ. We shall note these in his name, his work, and his actions.

JOSHUA A TYPE OF JESUS CHRIST

Manifestly declared to be an Epistle of Christ.

INTRODUCTION.—Begin by asking what an epistle is, whether any of the class have ever received one. Show that the better a letter is, the more clearly it expresses the character of the writer. Go on to speak of Christ's letters, how clearly they would express His mind, how we should like to have one. Did Christ ever write one? We do not know, and yet S. Paul here speaks of one. What letter does he refer to? Read the whole verse. Not one written on paper with ink, but on man's heart with the Spirit of the living God. Show that he means that men are, or may be, letters of Christ. To-day we are going to look at one of these letters, a very old one, written fifteen hundred years before Christ was seen on earth, and so may learn how we may become epistles of Christ. It should be carefully borne in mind throughout the Lesson that Joshua is the type of Christ, not Christ of Joshua. Quite unconsciously he caught the Spirit of Christ and exhibited it to men.

LESSON XXIII—*continued.* JOSHUA A TYPE OF JESUS CHRIST

MATTER.	METHOD.
1. The Signature of the Letter. Joshua's first name 'Oshea,' meaning Salvation. The addition of the word Jah, *i.e.* Jehovah, showed that He would bring deliverance to the people by God's help. Note that the new name was given to him when he went to spy out the land, *i.e.* when he took the first step towards bringing them into the Promised Land. Christ bore the same name, but not from the beginning of His ministry, but from His birth; because *that*, independently of anything that He said or did, was a deliverance for the world, inasmuch as it united, like Jacob's ladder, earth and heaven. (Show from Acts vii. 45 that Joshua and Jesus are the same names.)	1. Note that as a letter is signed with the name of the writer, so this old letter bears the sacred name. Show the importance of keeping the Christian name fair. Joshua little knew that the name which he was the first to bear would become the greatest name in all time and throughout the world. Joshua lived up to his name, and so consecrated it for the great use to which it should afterwards be put.
2. The Form of the Letter. Joshua's chief work was to bring Israel into the Promised Land, so Christ's to bring us into heaven. Joshua's ministry began at Jordan, so too Christ's. The waters of Jordan were stayed before Joshua, so the waters of death before Christ. The twelve stones, which became a permanent memorial of the one great event, were symbols of the twelve Apostles, the foundation-stones of the Church, the perpetual witness to Christ's victory over sin. Joshua, after the country had been won, divided it among the tribes, so the second Joshua, after He had overcome death, opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.	2. The next thing we note about a letter is its form as seen in the handwriting, the expressions used, etc.; they show the character of the writer. So in this old letter of Christ's we find strange resemblances—coincidences we should now call them—with the life of Christ. Show that every one's work ought to bear the same character as our Lord's in being a deliverance. The duty of some is to deliver from ignorance by teaching; of others, to save from discomfort and misery; of others, from sin and wrongdoing. If we are submissive to Christ's will, this work will be made clear, and like Christ's work. Perhaps when our work is done, others will see in our life some illustrations of His life. If it is to be so, show that every part of it must be brought under God's guidance. Speak to the children about their vocation and the changes that will happen after that is determined, and tell them that if they are wise they will, like Joshua, leave these in God's hands, *i.e.* they will ask Him to order them.

LESSON XXIII—*continued.* JOSHUA A TYPE OF JESUS CHRIST

MATTER.

3. The Substance of the Letter.

As we have seen, the characteristic features of Joshua's work were *faith* and *obedience*. He never doubted the ultimate success of his work, never hesitated about fulfilling what he was bidden to do. So he imaged forth the perfect faith of Christ (Heb. iii. 1, 2). Note how our Lord's parables especially show that He was as sure of the end as though it were already fulfilled. Though the Son of God, yet He is the Leader in Faith (Heb. xii. 2). So, too, obedience; this, too, He learned as the book of human life unfolded itself, each fresh page as perfectly as the last. He did not bring us into our new country by striving or crying, but by the same weapons as His servant chiefly used, namely, faith and obedience.

METHOD.

3. There is something more important in a letter than its signature or form, and that is its substance. What has the letter to say? Here we see the very heart of the writer. So in this old letter we see the heart of Christ. Show that this likeness was as perfect as it could be with human limitations. Joshua did not illustrate the Teaching or the Suffering work of Christ, but only that part which the individual characteristics of his own nature enabled him to.

BLACKBOARD SKETCH.

An Epistle of Christ.

An Epistle of Christ—written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God—not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh.

1. *The Signature.*
   - Joshua—its meaning—when given.
   - My Christian name—its meaning—when given.
   - 'His Father's Name written in their foreheads.'
2. *The Words.*
   - Joshua's outward life tells us of Christ's life.
   - Its beginning—miracles—end.
   - What will my outward life say?
   - If the outward setting is written by Christ it will remain, '*My* words shall not pass away.'
3. *The Substance.*
   - Joshua's life, as a whole, very pleasant reading.
   - Tells of faith and obedience.
   - Points to the Perfect Life.
   - So the lives of Christ's saints, 'Not I, but Christ who dwelleth in me.'

UNUSUAL WORDS

Adjure = To bind by oath, solemnly entreat, conjure (vi. 26).

Ambush = Men lying in ambush (viii. 2).

Clouted = Patched (ix. 5).

Describe = Mark, trace out (xviii. 4, 6).

Hough = To cut the hamstrings or back sinews (xi. 6, 9).

Lighted off = Alighted, got down from (xv. 18).

Magnify = Make great (iii. 7).

Moe = More (v. 11).

Nether = Lower (xv. 19).

Quit = Set free, acquit (ii. 20).

Rereward = Rearguard (vi. 9).

Slack = Slacken, relax (x. 6).

Wilily = Cunningly (ix. 4).

Wist = Knew (ii. 5).

Wot = Know (ii. 5).

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